TRAGIC EPISODES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION IN BRITTANY

ISAAC FOOT

TRAGIC EPISODES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION IN BRITTANY

PORTRAIT OF CARRIER. [*Frontispiece.*

A Contemporary Sketch.

From the Cabinet of Prints in the National Gallery.

TRAGIC EPISODES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION IN BRITTANY

WITH UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS

BY

G. LENOTRE

TRANSLATED BY H. HAVELOCH

LONDON
DAVID NUTT, 57–59 LONG ACRE
1912

Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & Co.
At the Ballantyne Press, Edinburgh

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
SANTA BARBARA

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	The Proconsul	1
II.	An Incident of a Novel Kind	34
III.	The Incumbent of St. Lyphard	68
IV.	The Committee at Work	83
V.	An Incident no Longer of a Novel Kind	103
VI.	The Night of Frimaire 24th (December 14, 1793)	114
VII.	The Terror	148
VIII.	The National Bathing-place	187
IX.	Some Testimonies	228
X.	Retribution	263
	List of Documents Cited	345

ILLUSTRATIONS

Portrait of Carrier	*Frontispiece*	
Dutch Galliot	*Facing p.*	39
Courtyard, Old Entrepôt	,,	43
Old Vicarage, St. Lyphard	,,	80
Map of Nantes	,,	82
Autographs of Committee	,,	92
Front, &c., of Le Bouffay	,,	101
Le Bouffay from the Quay	,,	120
Plan of Le Bouffay	,,	132
View of Little Holland and Harbour	,,	148
Ducros' House at Bourg-Fumé	,,	162
Old Entrepôt, Staircase	,,	252
Notice by Committee, Facsimile	,,	280
Entrepôt, Carrier's Day	,,	314
Two Sketches of Carrier at Trial	,,	328
Pavilion, Carrier's Garden	,,	344

Tragic Episodes of the French Revolution in Brittany

CHAPTER I

THE PROCONSUL

At the very time when, on October 16, 1793, the executioner's tumbril was carrying Queen Marie Antoinette towards the scaffold, the men of Vendée were making ready to fight a decisive battle for her cause.

On the previous evening they had evacuated Cholet, which the Republican troops at once occupied. The incapable and arrogant general who commanded them, Léchelle—and who for that matter only came on the scene when battles were over, leaving the conduct of the campaign to Kléber—had installed his head-quarters in the Place du Bretonnais, in a house belonging to a merchant, M. Mesnard-Dupin, and it was there that, towards midday on the 16th, he gathered his generals in council, joined by several representatives of the people, mem-

bers of the National Convention, who had been sent into the Western Provinces, and were there to be present at the extermination, so often announced, of the rebel army.

That army seemed finally doomed, although victorious everywhere for six months past. A skilful move of the "Blues" had just placed it with its back to the Loire, which it could not, it was believed, cross, in default of a bridge or pontoons, and being, moreover, hampered by thirty or forty thousand fugitives, women of all classes, children or frantic old men, dragging with them barrows, cattle, furniture, and provisions. Most of the Republican generals reckoned it impossible that the "Brigands" should resume the offensive, but Kléber, who knew by experience the mettle of his opponents, spent the afternoon in strengthening his positions: his right rested on the manor-house of Bois Grollean, his left on the Treike,[1] while his advance-guard was posted in the salt-marsh of La Papinière.

This disposition was not completed till late in the night. The woman with whom Kléber was housed seemed apprised of the plans of the Royalist leaders. On the morning of the 17th

[1] *Kléber en Vendée*, 1793–4. Documents published for the Society of Contemporary History, by H. Baguenier Désormeaux, p. 209.

she warned him that "within twice twenty-four hours" they would attack Cholet. The general told his colleagues of the warning, and proposed to march straight on the "enemy" and hinder him from passing the Loire or heading for Nantes; Marceau and others approved of this movement, but Léchelle and the Deputies present—except Merlin de Thionville—were against it. The prudent tactics they preached were always the same, "to advance in a phalanx and majestically." To which Kléber contemptuously retorted, "That plan has this advantage, that you need not rack your brains to hit upon it." And so saying he left the council.

Two hours later events justified him. At dawn the Vendean army, well equipped and determined, set itself in motion and came down from Beaupréau on Cholet, coming in contact with the outposts of the "Blues" towards midday. The musketry broke out all along the line, terrible and deafening, "like ten thousand drums rolling at once."[1] A furious encounter was soon in progress.

Kléber and Marceau held their ground against the attempt of the Royalists on the centre, despite the defection of General Muller, who,

[1] *Memoirs of Bouhillier de St. André*, quoted by Abbé Deniaud in *History of the War in Vendée*, iii. p. 40.

seeing the terrific struggle, turned about and fell back in disorder on Cholet. So headlong was the dash of the peasants that, breaking their way through the Mayence battalions, they penetrated to the suburbs of the town, seized the Republican artillery and turned it against the "Blues," and the latter were already scattering to the cry of "Save yourselves!" when General Haxo, issuing with his division from the ravine of La Maillochère, attacked the Vendeans in flank and recovered the captured guns. Their line was broken, then it re-formed, then broke again; they returned to the charge, and this internecine butchery went on into the night. In the darkness Republicans and Royalists fired at each other point-blank. In the distance the alarum clashed frantically from all the churches towards Beaupréau and Chemillé, while the broom-grown salt-marshes took fire. From these a biting smoke arose, enveloping the combatants in its reek. The peasants, whose close ranks had been broken by Beaupuy's horsemen, opened, fell back, and scattered, crying, "To the Loire! To the Loire!" They knew that to pass the river would secure their retreat and insure them fresh victories, and despite the curses of young Henri de la Rochejacquelein, who with 400 determined

men held in check the whole Republican army, they dispersed and vanished in the night.

All, Republicans and Royalists alike, fought heroically on that memorable day, when 45,000 Frenchmen met, about equally divided between the two camps.[1] Kléber's staff lost fourteen officers; General Beaupuy had two horses killed under him; Brigadier Targe continued fighting, though his body was pierced by a bullet; Vernange, another of Kléber's officers, when mortally wounded, had himself carried to his general's side and expired crying *Vive la République!* Saint Sauveur and Dubreton, in spite of their wounds, stayed with their men till the battle was over; while Patris, colonel of the Kastel Rifles, was killed; and old Agenor, commanding a battalion of grenadiers, a soldier of forty years' service, fell transfixed by the bayonet of a peasant, Jacques Vandangeon, known as "the Sworder."[2] Even the Conven-

[1] On the respective strength of the two forces see a note by Deniaud, *Histoire de la Guerre de Vendée*, vol. ii. p. 27. Among the most interesting accounts of the day we must quote that of Kléber (*Kléber en Vendée*, by Baguenier Désormeaux, pp. 214–226). The account of Poirier de Beauvais, commanding the Royalist artillery, should also be consulted (*Mémoires inédits de Bertrand Porier de Beauvais, publiés par la Comtesse de la Bouëre*, p. 146 *et seq.*). See also *The Battle of Cholet*, by Chassin; *La Vendée Patriote*, iii. p. 206 *et seq.*

[2] *Kléber en Vendée*, and Cretineau-Joly, Drochon's edition, vol. i. p. 302.

tion Deputy, Merlin de Thionville, was seen at the height of the encounter to put foot to the ground and point the cannons himself. His secretary, Juif, was killed by his side.[1] Bonchamps, mortally wounded by a bullet in the stomach, was carried off the field by his men, and d'Elbée had his breast torn open by shrapnel. "The rebels fought like tigers," wrote Kléber, "and our men like lions."[2]

Apart from Léchelle, the Republican commander-in-chief, who was not seen throughout the day, there was only one coward, a Representative of the People, wearing plume and sash. He was seen during the battle coming out of Cholet on horseback and advancing along the Beaupréau road just when the Blues were falling back. Seized with panic, this Deputy dismounted hastily from his horse, which he breathlessly led back by the halter as far as the town, through which he passed headlong, pushing aside the soldiers that stood in his way. He flung himself into an alley, abandoned his horse, his tricoloured sash and plume, and cast himself down from the top of the old fortifications, only regarding himself as safe when he had

[1] *Kléber en Vendée*, p. 225.

[2] During the battle of Cholet and the action two days before at La Tremblaye. "All my friends and comrades at Mayence," wrote he (*Kléber en Vendée*, p. 225, note).

crossed the bridge of La Moine. It is said that Kléber, witnessing his poltroonery, cried to his grenadiers, "Let the Citizen Deputy pass; he will do his killing after the victory is won." [1]

The poltroon in question was Jean Baptiste Carrier, an obscure member sent by the Department of Cantal to the National Convention. His history was that of plenty of others. Born of well-to-do yeomen and intended by them for the priesthood, he had at sixteen announced

[1] Several persons bore witness to Carrier's cowardice. One of them, Bonder, Military Commissioner with the Army of the West, declares: "The truth is that, so far from being on the field, he made off to the rear of the army with such headlong haste that he did not give himself time to put the bridle on his steed, and just led it with the halter. He came towards me quite out of breath, and begged me to let him have a bridle." Carrier denied the version, and denounced the witness as an aristocrat. Another likewise testifies that "Carrier made for the rear of the army with his horse unbridled, and fled for the life of him" (Buchez and Roux, xxxiv. pp. 170, 172). Chassin records that "Carrier was swept away in this partial rout, lost his horse in it, and did not reappear on the field" (*La Vendée Patriote*, iii. 210). Kléber's speech is recorded by Cretineau-Joly and the Abbé Deniaud. One single witness speaks of the "bravery" of Carrier at Cholet, and declares that the Deputy had a horse killed under him (*Bulletin*, vii. 41). But Choudieu, a colleague of Carrier's and an eye-witness, is very circumstantial. "He plunged," he writes, "into a street he did not know, and which led him where there was no exit. He then dropped from a wall which was part of the old fortifications of the town, parting with his horse, scarf, and plume. Next day the horse and insignia were brought back to us at Beaupréau. We thought him dead, until he reappeared in the morning of the 19th. It was the first time we saw him with the army" (Choudieu, *Mémoires et Notes*).

that he had no vocation and placed himself with an attorney at Aurillac. Being soon qualified as an agent, he went to Paris to study the niceties of law, came back to the country in 1785 and married the daughter of a tradesman in the place. Silent, absent, with a brutal and at times stultified exterior, he by no means attracted people: his violence, his careless attire, his intemperance and bitterness estranged him from his colleagues. For he had become procurator, a pretty shady business, out of which he nevertheless made some profit, sufficient to buy a small post. At the outbreak of the Revolution he assiduously attended the people's club, known as the "Society of the Lovers of Nature." There he revealed himself as a fluent speaker, though his delivery was markedly headlong. He became president of a Watch Committee, came forward as candidate at the elections of 1792, was declared elected at the final scrutiny, and, leaving his wife at Aurillac, went to take his seat in the Convention. He posed there as a silent member, voted for the death of the King, proposed the creation of the Revolutionary Tribunal and the putting under arrest of Egalité Orleans, and on May 31st joined the Mountain, which course led to his being sent with his colleague Pocholle on a mission to

Normandy. From thence he passed into Brittany, stayed at Rennes, and was ordered by the Committee of Public Safety to proceed to Nantes. He reached there on October 2nd, leaving on the 9th to join the army, which is why he was at Cholet on the 17th. We have just read how he behaved there. In the evening, when the firing had ceased, he ventured on to the battlefield, and made his way as far as the manor-house of Bois Grolleau where, in the afternoon, a bloody engagement had been fought. He dined there with Léchelle, and the two recounted their exploits to each other; Carrier declared that he had lost his horse at the height of the encounter in the salt-marsh of La Papinière;[1] and Léchelle, who had hidden there too, had no resource as usual but to find fault with the march of the army, which had not advanced "in one majestic mass." Together the two cronies next day reached Beaupréau, whither headquarters had been transferred.[2] The Vendeans had crossed the Loire, leaving on the left bank 4000 "Blue" prisoners, to whom Bonchamps, as he died, had granted their lives. On the 19th the Republican army bivouacked at La Chapelle-Heulin, and on

[1] *Histoire de la guerre Vendée*, by Abbé Deniaud, iii. 52.
[2] *Kléber en Vendée*, p. 229.

the 20th re-entered Nantes, together with the triumphant Carrier, who quartered himself permanently at La Villetreux House in Petty Holland, which had been requisitioned to house the Convention Delegates.

The purpose for which Carrier was sent was at once vague and precise: he was "to purge the body politic of all the evil humours circulating in it."[1] Such were the instructions he had received from the Committee of Public Safety, which for that matter let no opportunity pass for reminding its Deputies that they were "invested with plenary powers."[2] We know what were the end and object of these missions. In principle the agents the Convention sent into the province were to act "in couples," one checking the other.[3] As half of them were replaced every month,[4] they could delegate none of the functions with which they were clothed.[5] They were bound to report every week to the Convention, and send in

[1] *Collection of the Acts of the Public Safety Committee*, by Aulard, vol. viii. p. 289. Quoted by Lallier in *Carrier*, p. 40.

[2] *Les Représentants du Peuple en Mission*, by H. Wallon, vol. i. p. 24 *et seq.*

[3] It is true that a decree of April 29, 1793, authorised them to act alone, but only after having, by a decision arrived at in concert, shared the guiding principle of their actions.

[4] This applied to representatives accredited to the various armies, which was the case with Carrier.

[5] Decree of July 15, 1793.

daily to the Committee of Safety a diary of their doings. Unhappily these precautions, as will be seen, were not observed. Thus Carrier reached Nantes on October 20, 1793, when he and his colleague, Francastel, took certain measures in common, but the latter soon went back to Angers and left Carrier sole master of the situation in the Lower Loire. As for the reports given of his doings, one need only turn over his collected correspondence with the Committee to realise that "the diary of his doings, besides being very intermittent, was so laconic as to verge on mystification, save for invectives, big words, and fine phrases."[1] It seems unaccountable that from the very beginning of this ridiculous correspondence the Government should not at once have resented the attitude adopted by the furious maniac to whom it had deputed its powers, and recalled him instantly.

His mission, it must be owned, was particularly arduous and delicate. It obviously

[1] The first of these letters, written from Nantes, ends as follows: "I shall endeavour to stay here some days. To-day I am going to work to have the ringleaders shot, those who were found with means of rebellion in their hands. All will be well, but bah! terrible examples are needed, and these brigands must be pursued, a duty which our troops and generals desire as ardently as we to fulfil" (*Archives Historiques de la Guerre;* document quoted by Wallon, *Les Représentants du Peuple en Mission*, i. 171).

required a different man from this brutal ruffian, who had been in no way prepared for it. It would be idle to discuss here the means employed for the pacification of the Vendée; yet let us bear in mind a saying of the deputy Lequinio, a man but little tinged with sympathy for this "savage region," which, as he puts it, was "easier to reach than to contend with." Carrier did not even look at this side of the question, and from the outset proclaimed nothing but destruction and massacre, encouraged thereto by the Convention, which declared, "All the brigands of La Vendée must be exterminated before the end of October." [1] Even at Nantes, directly he got out of the post-chaise, and before obtaining any information as to the nature of the inhabitants or their resources, he announced that "if all the traders and merchants were not denounced to him within a few days, he would have them all imprisoned and then decimated by the guillotine." [2]

Now Nantes was one of the towns of France "in which the middle-class had welcomed the Revolution with the greatest enthusiasm." [3] Its inhabitants were to a large extent re-

[1] *La Vie et les Crimes de Carrier, député du Cantal*, by Gracchus Babœuf, p. 112.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 107.

[3] A. Lallié, *Carrier*, p. 57.

publican in opinion, though, to be sure, to a moderate extent; it had never made terms with "the brigands" of Vendée, nay, three months before Carrier appeared on the scene it had valiantly repelled an attack by them. So eminent a service rendered to the cause of the Convention would have called for some leniency. But Carrier had brought a foregone conviction with him; he had come there to kill greatly.

He set himself without delay to gather those about him who would be his willing tools. In addition to the three local authorities—municipal, district and departmental—composed of men weak and ready for the worst concessions, Nantes had for a short time past possessed a Revolutionary Committee, called into being on October 11th by the Deputies Gillet and Ruelle, when Carrier was still with the army. This Committee numbered thirteen members, none of whom, but Proust the nail-maker,[1] was remarkable for any special qualifications or a meritorious past. Among those whose names will occur

[1] Proust employed eighty hands at his nail-factory. He was "the good angel" of the Committee. His colleagues gibed at him for a sniveller and exciter of pity. He had adopted a little Vendean, left an orphan by the drownings or shootings, and also the five children of one of his colleagues, although he had five of his own. Proust was an excellent man; being commissioned to issue certificates of "civism," he gave as many as he was asked for (MS. note by Lallié).

more than once in this narrative,[1] must be cited

[1] The following are the names of the thirteen members of the Committee.* That of Grandmaison did not appear in the decree of October 11th (Lallié, *Le Comité Révolutionnaire de Nantes*, p. 17), which accordingly only specified twelve members. We add to the list three names which were subsequently included, owing to vacancies arising, and also those of the secretaries and delegates.

BACHELIER, Jean Marguerite, aged 42, born at Nantes, attorney, Rue Contrescarpe, opposite the "Good Shepherd," first floor, President of the Committee up to December 15, 1793.

GOULLIN, Jean Jacques, aged 36, born at San Domingo, no calling, Rue Félix, on the Cours, second floor. Succeeded the last named as President of the Committee.

CHAUX, Pierre, born at Nantes, aged 34, a bankrupt merchant, Place Gracchus (formerly Saint Pierre).

PERROCHAUD, Jean, aged 47, born at Nantes, building contractor, Rue du Bignon-Lestard (now Rue Scribe).

MOREAU DE GRANDMAISON, Michel, aged 38, born at Nantes, fencing-master, opposite the Exchange, Sagory House, first-floor back.

NAUX, Louis Nicolas, aged 34, born at Nantes, bushel-maker and crockery-dealer, Quai des Gardes Françaises. Left the Committee January 25, 1794, resigned March 8th.

BOLLOGNIEL, Antoine Nicolas, aged 42, clockmaker, Haute Grande Rue 38.

RICHELOT, contractor. Left Committee December 18, 1793.

LÉVÊQUE, Jean, aged 57, born at Mayenne, mason, 6 Rue St. Nicolas.

CHEVALIER, 10 Rue Keller, near the Place Viarmes. Left Committee April 14, 1794.

MAINGUET, Jean Baptiste, aged 35, born at Nantes, pin-maker, 23 Rue St. Nicolas.

GUILLET, Pierre, nail-maker, Rue St. Nicolas. His name disappears from January 6, 1794. He was brother-in-law of Louis Nicolas Naux.

GAULIER, Jean (or GAULLIER), writing-master, nominated subsequent to the establishment of the Committee.

BARRAS, paid secretary of the Committee.

JOLLY, BATAILLE, DURASSIER, PINARD, DHÉRON, GALLON, delegates.

* *Bulletin*, vi., No. 62, p. 247.

Louis Naux the bushel-maker, Bollogniel the clockmaker, Perrochaud the contractor and thief,[1] Mainguet the pin-maker, who, being scarcely able to read, put his signature at the foot of decrees without informing himself of their wording, and above all, the fencing-master Moreau de Grandmaison, a gentleman who did not think he had lowered himself by founding a fencing-school opposite the Exchange. Grandmaison had been sentenced for assassination, then reprieved, was thirty-nine years old, and drank. A wild beast when intoxicated, he proved gentle as a child when imprisoned.

But the three heads of the new Committee were Bachelier, Chaux and Goullin.

The first of these, former counsel to the estates of the bishopric, timid, awkward, chary of speech, yet a ready writer, precise, punctual, and hypocritical, was the father of a family and a needy man. Advanced in 1792 to be a notable in the municipality, he had shown Federalist tendencies at a happy juncture, and now declared himself a supporter of energetic measures, not from cruelty nor yet ambition, but simply out of cowardice. Bachelier, ready for anything, had successively been

[1] M. Lallié's MS. notes.

a member, in March 1793, of a short-lived Executive Committee, then in August of a Board of Arrests, more short-lived still, and in September of a Watch Committee, which lived an even less time than the two former. Bachelier was a man of forty-three.

Pierre Chaux, his junior by eight years, a shopkeeper twice declared bankrupt,[1] was a man of middling intelligence and first-rate vanity. As "impetuous and ebullient"[2] as the last named had been neutral, he wound his way into politics by frequenting the Society of Cordeliers, which met at the church of St. Vincent. Greedy of gain, he bought in 1792, and in the teeth of his creditors, 60,000 livres' worth of national property.[3] Becoming president of the club, and tricked out moreover with the added name of Socrates, which accorded ill with his total lack of moral sense,[4] he acted as secretary to Philippeaux of the Convention, and thus found himself nominated when the Revolutionary Committee was instituted.

As for Jean Jacques Goullin, he was a native of San Domingo, who came very young to Nantes, where his father was a merchant. Pre-

[1] Declaration of G. F. Laënnec, *Bulletin*, vi., No. 56, p. 223.
[2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 69, p. 272.
[3] Declaration of G. F. Laënnec, *Bulletin*, vi., No. 56, p. 223.
[4] Campardon, *Le Tribunal Révolutionnaire*, ii. p. 82.

vious to the Revolution he practised no calling save that of holding forth in the coffee-houses of the town. He was thirty-six in 1793, of short stature, with black hair and small eyes, his nose long and upturned; his complexion pale and his appearance very frail. In fact, he suffered from painful colic of the stomach, and lived on a diet of slops. Elegant, sceptical, very intellectual and affecting the airs of "a good fellow," he was prompt in rejoinder and spoke with a sort of captivating eloquence, as the reader will be able to judge. He lived with his friend Gallon, the sugar-refiner, and his wife, a very decent townswoman for that matter, in a house that stood at the corner of the Rue du Lycée and the Rue Felix, and belonging to Citizeness Minée, mother of the constitutional bishop. As the Gallon-Goullin household was short of space, he thought it expedient to annex a fine lodging in the same building occupied by Mme. de Coutances, who was sent to quarters in prison.[1] The two worthies installed themselves without scruple in the furnished rooms of the aristocrat, and dwelt there as long as the good days lasted.

Goullin, according to his own admission, directed the Revolutionary Committee from

[1] M. Lallié's MS. notes.

the very first, although not avowedly its President until December 15, 1793, succeeding in that position Bachelier, who had nominally held it for two months. If the powers of a Representative were unlimited, those of the Revolutionary Committee that took its place were not less so, and as soon as the latter assumed its functions terror reigned in the city. Arrests for no reason, arbitrary imprisonment, exactions, denunciations, the affixing of seals without any legal warrant—such was the fruit of its good pleasure. The members of the Committee drew ten livres a day [1]—little enough considering their labours—but they managed, as the reader will learn, to create for themselves additional resources, despite the oath they had taken, the terms of which deserve to be quoted here, as setting forth a course of conduct not one word of which was adhered to.

"I swear to maintain liberty and equality, the unity and indivisibility of the Republic, the safety of all persons and properties; to pursue with all my might the Federalists, the Feuillants, the Moderates, and other enemies of the common weal, under whatever form or

[1] Their pay was fixed at six livres, but Carrier increased it on October 22nd.

colour they may venture to show themselves; never to be influenced by personal interest, kinship, or even friendship. Lastly, to die at my post rather than depart from the principles of the public safety and well-being." [1]

Reassured by such formal undertakings as to the patriotism of the members of the Committee, Carrier trusted to their efforts and handed over to them the city of Nantes. Without asking for any information, he placed full faith in their sans-culotte tenets; but their fellow-citizens, who knew them well, began at once to be uneasy. On seeing greater powers than those possessed by any administrative body conferred upon a parcel of men, "immoral, devoid of principle, destitute of delicacy, and who, being ill-regulated in their private lives, could not display any good conduct in public matters," [2] they foresaw the catastrophes that were at hand. As the Committee got to work their apprehensions did not diminish. Folks saw with consternation the adoption of preposterous measures—the incarceration, for instance, "of all people of intelligence whom public opinion declares to be suspect." [3] Moreover, arrests were so precipitately and "airily" carried out

[1] A. Lallié, *Le Comité Révolutionnaire de Nantes*, p. 17.
[2] Declaration of G. F. Laënnec, *Bulletin*, vi., No. 56, p. 223.
[3] A. Lallié, *Le Sans-culotte Goullin*, p. 35.

that a doctor, visiting one day a patient, saw himself apprehended and carried off with him before the authorities of the Department. Both patient and doctor were for that matter wholly innocent, only the officers, carried away by their zeal, had made a mistake in the storey.[1]

We can fancy the difficulty of carrying out merely through the police authorities the active and sustained vigilance demanded by the proconsul. As the Committee needed an array of alguazils, Choux and Goullin, well informed as to the slums of Nantes, undertook its enlistment. It may be thought, perhaps, that in order to choose their men, they had recourse to the municipal authorities.[2] Not so, Goullin betook himself to the Popular Society that met at St. Vincent's Church, hence known as the Vincent la Montagne Club. Here he set forth his desire to get together a band of patriots, who, in consideration of a salary of 10 livres a day, not including windfalls, would be bound to denounce all the ill-wishers and enemies of the Republic, with authority to call in the help of military force, to carry out domiciliary visits, to insist upon the opening or forcing of doors

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 56, p. 233.

[2] *Id.*, *ib.*, No. 88, p. 249. Gicqueneau, an administrator, declared that the administrative bodies took no part in the organisation of the Marat Company.

and to place any suspected citizen under arrest. The Committee, which shared, as we have seen, the unlimited powers of the Representative, conferred equally boundless powers upon the cut-throats out of whom it was about to compose its executive force. Goullin proceeded to make some satisfactory selections.

"There are some fine beauties for you!" he sneered, as he looked at the first squad of his guard. "Are there any greater scoundrels? For we want men of that kind to bring the aristocracy to reason." [1]

He led his phalanx to the house of Carrier, who in military fashion received it with drawn sabre in hand. He had brought back from his brief campaign a martial tone and bearing, and thought he knew how to kindle the spirit of soldiers. The members of the Committee were presented to him as "citizens on whom one could reckon." "So much the better," said he; "be sure, my lads, that the Republic will pay you well." [2]

Having closed the doors of the room into which they had been brought, he walked up and

[1] This speech was afterwards thrown up against him, and he could not deny it, and explained it in this way. "I may have said, 'There are fine b——s,' because *there were some scoundrels among them*, but I said nothing more."

[2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 88, p. 349. Affidavit of Bernard Séquinel, joiner at Nantes, member of the Marat Company.

down and harangued the troop, brandishing his sabre. "I believe you to be good b——s," he added. "I am going to give you full powers; I hope you will turn them to account, and that you will carry out my wishes." [1]

On leaving the Proconsul's mansion, they proceeded to the church of St. Pierre to elect leaders. Fleury was chosen captain; Richard the hatter, adjutant; René Naux, the armourer, whose brother Louis was one of the Revolutionary Committee, got his stripes as quartermaster; and the drunkard Durassier, a broker on the harbour, was chosen as secretary. It was determined that the new "crack corps" should take the name of "The Revolutionary or Brutus Company," but some days later, when definitely constituted, the recruits, to whom this Roman name did not mean much, declared that they preferred to bear the name of Marat, "that true and constant friend of the people, that virtuous martyr of Liberty and Equality, whose memory was well calculated to animate and sustain good Sans-culottes." [2] Accordingly, the array of the Revolutionary Committee was

[1] *Bulletin*, vi. No. 73, p. 290. Affidavit of Nicolas Jomard, merchant at Nantes, member of the Marat Company.

[2] *Account rendered by the Members of the Revolutionary Committee at Nantes*, Nivose 15th, year II., *National Archives*, F 7, 4422.

styled the "Marat Company." On October 28th Carrier and his colleague Francastel, who was still at Nantes, signed the decree conferring the individual commissions, of which each member received a copy, and they then proceeded to the ceremony of swearing-in, the oath being couched in the following terms by Bachelier, Goullin, and Grandmaison.[1]

[1] The record of these commissions was registered by Nugent the notary (Lallié, *La Compagnie Marat*, p. 7). Here is the text of this document: "The Representatives of the People with the Army of the West give citizen —— of the said Company the right of watching all suspected townspeople of Nantes, all strangers who enter and take up their abode there, all who seek refuge there, monopolists of every kind, all who seek to abstract or fraudulently conceal the means of life, wares and goods of primary necessity. He shall keep watch on all ill-wishers and enemies of the Republic, or on any that have already committed similar delinquencies. He will be in duty bound to denounce them to the Committee of Vigilance sitting at Nantes, to all constituted authorities in that which concerns them, and to the Representatives of the People, if there be any question of plot against the national liberty or against the general safety of the Republic. The said citizen —— shall have the right to arrest or have arrested any individual whom he thinks it expedient to secure, and will busy himself in discovering all meetings known as *Chambres Littéraires;* and, further, will arrest or cause to be arrested all individuals he may find taking part in such gatherings or *Chambres Littéraires*. The said citizen —— shall exercise supervision and the powers deputed to him through the whole extent of the Department of Loire-Inférieure. The armed forces shall in all respects obey the requisitions addressed to it, either in the name of the Company or in the name of those who form it individually. —— shall likewise have the right of making domiciliary visits wherever he considers it necessary both in Nantes and throughout the Department. No person shall be able to oppose him, but

"I swear that Marat, so traduced and vilified by the Feuillant party, by the Frogs of the Marsh, and in a word, by the counter-revolutionaries, lived only for the people, and that he died a victim to his devotion to that same people.

"I swear that the revolutionary principles which he dared to profess both in his writings and in the tribune of the Convention were, are, and shall always be my own. I swear that the Popular Associations are the true pillars of liberty, and that I will always regard them as such.

"I swear to denounce and pursue, and that with all means at my command, the traducers of these beneficent Associations.

"I vow death to the Royalists, to fanatics, to the Muscadins, the Feuillants, and the Moderates, in whatever colours, masks, or shapes they may disguise themselves.

on the contrary, all shall be bound to open the doors of all places or lodgings where he may deem it expedient to exercise the vigilance of his inquiries. In case of refusal, the said —— remains authorised to have the doors opened by skilled workmen, or even broken in if need be. In case of refractoriness, he will call in the military, which shall be bound to yield him obedience and succour. All such as offer resistance shall be seized on the spot as resisters of legitimate authority. Given at Nantes, the 7th day of the 1st decade of the 2nd month of the year II. of the Republic one and indivisible. Signed, Francastel and Carrier" (*Pièces remises à la Commission des Vingt-et-un*, p. 50).

"I swear never to compromise with kinship or my personal interests, or even with friendship; in a word, not to recognise as parents, brothers, or friends any but patriots alone, the ardent defenders of the Republic.

"Lastly, I swear to defend to my last breath the maintenance of the indivisible Republic, and to be scrupulously obedient to the military regulations of my Company." [1]

The men of the Marat Company, or more shortly "the Marats"—for so they were styled at Nantes—instantly flung themselves on the town. We shall shortly see them at work.[2] By exploits

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 92, p. 361.

[2] The "Marats," according to some historians, numbered sixty; others, however, put them at about forty, and that figure is nearer the truth than the other. I have not met with a single list of their names. Here, nevertheless, is one which I have endeavoured to draw up according to various documents, and which, though probably incomplete, will serve none the less to show that they were recruited from the most varied classes of society, but mostly among the small tradesmen of Nantes. With regard to each name, I have given the document in which the person meant is set down as having formed part of the Company.

Bercard (or Bernard) (*Courrier Républicain*, Vendémiaire 29th, year III.).

Boulay (or Boulet), Joseph, shoemaker, aged 26 (*ibid.*, Brumaire 28th, year III.).

Boussy, dealer in parasols, aged 35, born at La Chassaigne, Puy de Dôme (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 87, p. 348; and *Courrier Républicain* of Brumaire 24th, year III.). It is evidently he who is concerned in a story recorded by Beaulieu (*Essais*

of peculiar character several of them earned a reputation of their own. Durassier, René Naux, Richard, already named, Ducou the wig-maker,

historiques sur les causes et les effets de la Révolution en France, vi. p. 94).

Bouvier, carpenter (*Courrier Républicain*, Brumaire 27th, year III.).

Chartier, thread-maker (A. Lallié, *J. B. Carrier*, p. 331).

Chevalier, Campardon (*Le Tribunal Révolutionnaire de Paris*, ii. 75).

Coron (or Couron), ex-attorney, late member of the Committee of Three, aged 40 (*Courrier Républicain*, Brumaire 17th, year III.).

Crépin (or Crespin), wig-maker and wine-merchant, aged 38, born at Paris (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 84, p. 335 ; and vii., No. 2, p. 6).

Delasalle, Louis Antoine, broker for the unlading of ships (Bachelier's *Notes*, Dugast-Matifeux Collection, Nantes Library).

Desmarets (?) (*Courrier Républicain*, Vendémiaire 29th, year III.).

Dubreuil, Joseph (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 85, p. 338 ; and Bachelier's *Notes*).

Ducou, wig-maker (A. Lallié, *J. B. Carrier*, p. 331).

Durand, A. Lallié (*La Compagnie Marat*, p. 31).

Durassier, Jean François, born at Nantes, broker for unlading ships coming from San Domingo, aged 50, clerk of the Company (Campardon, *Tribunal Révolutionnaire*, ii. 32).

Fleury (?), captain of the Company (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 88, p. 349).

Foucaud (or Foucault) (Lallié, *J. B. Carrier*, p. 331).

Gauthier, Jacques, cutler (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 94, p. 373).

Giret, Claude (*Girek*, according to Bachelier's *Notes*)—*Courrier Républicain* of Brumaire 30th, year III.

Gouffin, Julien, cooper and watchman (*Courrier Républicain*, Brumaire 26th, year III.). Bachelier writes it *Couffin*.

Hoqmar (?) (Campardon, *Tribunal Révolutionnaire*, ii. 75).

Jolly (?), Jean Baptiste, aged 50, born at Angerville le

Gauthier the cutler, and Jolly the founder,[1] will figure on various grounds in the narrative of the "noyades"; but the most famous of all is Pierre Foucaud, a man of Nantes, aged 31,

Martel, Seine-Inférieure. Commissary of the Revolutionary Committee.

Jomard, Nicolas, merchant at Nantes (*Courrier Républicain*, Brumaire 8th, year III.; and *Bulletin*, vi., No. 73, p. 290).

Lafarge (?) (*Courrier Républicain*, Vendémiaire 29th, year III.).

Lebrun, dyer (*ibid.*, Brumaire 15th, year III.).

Lechantre (?) (Campardon, *Tribunal Révolutionnaire*, ii. 75).

Lucas, wig-maker (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 84, p. 335).

Mony, roofer, aged 31 (*Courrier Républicain*, Brumaire 24th, year III.).

Naux (or Naud), René, sometime dealer in arms, quartermaster of the Company (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 88, p. 349).

Nicolon (?) (Lallié, *La Compagnie Marat*, p. 32).

Petit, Julien, cooper (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 92, p. 366).

Pinatel, wig-maker (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 89, p. 353).

Poncet (?) (Lallié, *La Compagnie Marat*, p. 31).

Richard, Jean Claude, hatter, adjutant of the Marat Company (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 88, p. 349).

Sauvage, Charles Mathurin, cooper (*Courrier*, Frimaire 1st, year III.).

Séguinel, René Bernard, joiner at Nantes (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 88, p. 349).

Varin, François, wig-maker (*ibid.*, No. 89, p. 355); ex-attorney, says the *Courrier*, Brumaire 24th, year III.

Viau (or Viot), Louis, nail-maker (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 94, p. 373).

Vic, stove-maker (Lallié, *J. B. Carrier*, p. 331).

[1] I have nowhere been able to find the description "Marat" attached to the name of Jolly. The man was commissary of the Revolutionary Committee, but like Vic and Durassier, who bore the same title, you see him *at work* with the "Marats" at Le Bouffay and elsewhere. I think I may argue from this that, like his two colleagues, he belonged to the Company.

cooper by calling and wine merchant. He had fought bravely in June at the time of the siege; being captured by the Vendeans, he succeeded in escaping and resumed his rank of lieutenant in the National Guard.

Beside these two engines of terror, formidable and pliant, Carrier had of course at command a Revolutionary Tribunal, soon supplemented by a Military Commission, styled "the Lenoir," after its president. An additional tribunal, the Bignon Commission, also came from Le Mans to lend its assistance. We should have nothing to say of these redoubtable institutions which had no share in the "noyades," were we not forced to call attention to the president of the former, who will play an important part in our narrative. His name was François Anne Louis Phélippes de Coatgoureden de Tronjolly. A leading lawyer, Phélippes-Tronjolly — so he democratically wrote his noble name in the year II.—had been for ten years king's attorney at Rennes, then "Commissaire royal" at Paimbœuf, and lastly president elect of the criminal court of Loire-Inférieure, whence he was transferred in the same capacity to the revolutionary tribunal as reorganised by Carrier. Phélippes-Tronjolly, tinctured like many others with Federalism, showed himself a frantic

terrorist in order to earn oblivion for past lukewarmness. Nevertheless, on certain occasions he had the courage to resist Carrier and the Committee, an attitude which, by its rarity, has ensured him the indulgence of History.[1]

Lastly, in order to complete the list of *dramatis personæ*, prior to the first scenes, it is indispensable to point out that Carrier, dating from his installation at Nantes, appointed a sort of civil and military household, but without making it clear what guided his choice or determined his preferences. We merely mention his secretaries Bonneval, Picaud,[2] and Prigent,[3] so as not to omit them, and also his personal valet, Jean Cousine.[4] But we must needs quote the names of some close adherents with whom he surrounded himself, and with whom he practised a sort of coarse good-fellowship.

Guillaume Lamberty, journeyman coachmaker, was the important personage in the band. Like Foucaud, he had fought heroically against the Vendeans. He was credited with having repulsed, at the head of some valiant men of the same kidney, an army of 10,000

[1] *Carrier à Nantes*, by M. le Comte Fleury, p. 502.

[2] *Pièces remises à la Commission des Vingt-un*, p. 91.

[3] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 85, p. 339; *Déclaration de Sanderay*. The name is given as Préjan.

[4] *Pièces remises à la Commission des Vingt-un*, p. 84.

brigands. Doubtless he rendered Carrier some signal service during the latter's brief stay with the army. The Representative employed him there as a spy, and on his return to Nantes rewarded him with the rank of adjutant-general in command of the gunners.[1]

Scarcely was he in favour when he presented to the Proconsul his friend Robert Fouquet, whom he wished for as aide-de-camp. Fouquet was a warehouseman and cooper, and had been drummed out of the National Guard in 1791 in disgrace. But Carrier, who was a judge of men, made him also an adjutant-general, though without commission. For that matter he owned, later on, that he did not know him.[2]

The two thus newly promoted were in need of an orderly officer. They made choice of Théodore Lavaux,[3] one of the "Blue" prisoners of the Vendean Army, a lofty patriot to whom Bonchamps, as he lay dying, had granted life and liberty. Lavaux was an ardent Republican; during his captivity among the "brigands," feeling sure he would be shot, and dreading lest his corpse might be confused with that of some Chouan, he tattooed with the point of

[1] No file is in existence in the archives of the Ministry of War relative to Lamberty.

[2] Lallié, *Le sans-culotte Goullin*, p. 88.

[3] You find the name also spelt *Lareau*.

a knife on one of his arms, "Je mourrai pour la République, Vive la liberté!" What might not such men as Lamberty and Lavaux have become under the orders of a Marceau or a Kléber? What a career, mayhap a glorious one, might they not have pursued? But Fate handed them over to the dastardly Carrier, who made them into assassins.[1]

With these three military men was associated a young Nantais of twenty, son of a midwife and a joiner; who called himself Pierre Robin. He, too, if we are to believe Chaux, had "fought like a lion" in the Vendée; but he was valued above all for his merry wit and his jests.[2] Made President, in spite of his youth, of the Vincent la Montagne Club, he was to be seen parading the streets, trailing a big sabre, whose blade had been worn by cutting off the heads of "brigands." Robin, a prater, a cynic, a gay companion, a handsome noodle and a braggart, was "riddled with vices." Carrier saw him, and "took a desperate fancy to him."[3] As a matter of fact, this ill-omened youth was perhaps the only Nantais who acquired any influence over the Delegate.

In the immediate orbit of Carrier there moved

[1] Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 10.

[2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 74, p. 283.

[3] Affidavit of the woman Pichot (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 74, p. 283).

yet another hobbledehoy of nineteen, whose outline is still more vague.[1] He was a Parisian who had drifted to Nantes, none knows how. He claimed the name of Lalouet,[2] and prided himself on a vague relationship to Robespierre.[3] Many saw in him a spy of the Committee of Public Safety.

Lastly, to complete the group, there figured in it a gentleman of Irish origin, John Baptiste Jacques Daniel Guillaume O'Sullivan, fencing-master by warrant of the king. Married at Nantes in 1781 when he was only twenty-one, O'Sullivan was a wild beast, an animal, and a madman to boot. Carrier saw his worth, and appointed him town-major.[4]

Lamberty, Fouquet, Lavaux, Robin, Lalouet, and O'Sullivan formed what was called, not without a spice of envy, the Staff. The honour of intimate access to the Proconsul made many jealous of these privileged persons. The members of the Revolutionary Committee were

[1] *Courrier*, Brumaire 14th, year III., p. 40; 365, p. 48.

[2] We find also *Lalloué* or *Laloi*.

[3] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 81, pp. 322–323. This relationship, according to the genealogies drawn up by A. Paris (*La jeunesse de Robespierre*), seems absolutely fictitious.

[4] *Journal des Lois*, Brumaire 9th, year II. Some details concerning O'Sullivan may be found in a study by Vallert, *Les Anglais en France*, published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, June 1910. Information supplied by A. Lallié.

afraid of them; while they, on the other hand, had nothing but contempt for those cowards. Hence from the very first there was a latent antagonism, which, some months later, was to help on the final dénouement.

CHAPTER II

AN INCIDENT OF A NOVEL KIND

At the erstwhile monastery of the Little Capucines on the Hill of Misery some ecclesiastics were held in durance.

These were the remnant of five or six hundred priests arrested for refusing the oath in Brittany, Anjou, and Maine; those that were sound were to be deported to Cayenne, the others merely detained under the supervision of the municipality. To the number of a hundred—now reduced by death, anon augmented by fresh arrests—they had been lodged at first in the house of St. Clement,[1] then transferred to the manor-house, and from there to the Carmelites. During the summer they had been huddled on board the *Therèse*, anchored in the Loire, off the Drying-ground, but as the hire of the vessel caused the city a certain expense, and keeping watch on board meant additional duty for the soldiers, they had once more out of economy removed these

[1] Lallié, *Histoire de la persécution des prêtres noyés.*

"recalcitrants," and from August 7th they were imprisoned at the Capucines.

These successive removals had not been carried out without harm to the captives. First the sacred vessels, the patens and church ornaments found in their luggage, had been confiscated; later on a company of artillerymen had shared their belongings, left at the Carmelites. On board the *Therèse* they were officially stripped of their cassocks, girdles, birettas, albs, chasubles, and altar-cloths. Six only of them had obtained leave to retain their gowns, "on their affidavit that they possessed no other garments." None of them had protested against this last spoliation; they did not complain, they asked for nothing, not even the strict carrying out of the law which did not apply to priests sixty years of age or ill. Of the ninety captives at the Little Capucines fifteen were helpless, fifty were past sixty; the age of ten others is not known.[1] The young and able-bodied, who should legally have been deported, were there in the smallest minority; none of them, for that matter, was confined for "political reasons." They had all, it is true, refused to take the civic oath re-

[1] The list has been determined by Lallié, *Histoire de la persécution des prêtres noyés*, p. 151.

quired by the law, and which they held to be contrary to their beliefs. But with that exception they had in nowise shown themselves hostile to the new order of things. Several, it is certain, had accepted, not without satisfaction, administrative reforms. One of them, for instance, the Abbé Julien Landeau, vicar of St. Lyphard, in the outskirts of Guérande, a priest of charitable feelings and conciliatory temper, was so highly respected by his parishioners that they had chosen him mayor of the Commune, at the time when the municipality was constituted, giving him his curate, M. Goujon, as secretary. Not many months later, to avoid being compelled to take the oath, the vicar of St. Lyphard had been forced to lay aside his tricoloured scarf, the emblem of office. He had been arrested and carried to Nantes, where for near upon a year he bravely shared the misery of his fellow-prisoners.[1]

The Department and the Commune had nevertheless a complaint against the submissive portion of the clergy. The hapless priests had to be fed; they had chosen as caterer one of their fellow-captives, Abbé

[1] *Notices sur les conférences de la foi dans le diocèse de Nantes pendant la Révolution*, by Abbé Briand. The vicar of St. Lyphard, born at Quenigen in Guérande in 1745, was, at the time of his imprisonment, forty-eight years of age.

Douaud,[1] some time canon of Nantes, and secretary to Mgr. de la Muzanchère. The patriots doubtless expected that most of the captives had some savings jealously hoarded in view of coming mischances; it had been necessary, nevertheless, to allot them a sum for food, and this allowance had been stingily fixed at twenty-five sous a day for each.[2] Victuals were dear in the autumn of 1793, and Abbé Douaud, despite miracles of economy and resource, could not succeed in satisfying the needs of his companions. He had reduced their daily quota of bread to half a pound.[3] Since the beginning of September the captives only had one meal, at midday. They contented themselves in the evening "with a sorry repast," yet in spite of

[1] Gabriel Urbain Douaud, born at Tiffauges. His brother, Louis Georges, curate at St. Donatien's in Nantes in 1770, then vicar of Savenay, was banished to Spain, came back to France in 1802 and resumed possession of his cure. He died at Savenay in 1833 (*Le clergé Vendéen victime de la Révolution*, by Abbé A. Barraud, i. 174, note).

[2] The allotment was originally twenty sous a prisoner. But in the early days of August, on the representations of Abbé Douaud, and considering the scarcity of victuals, it was raised to twenty-five.

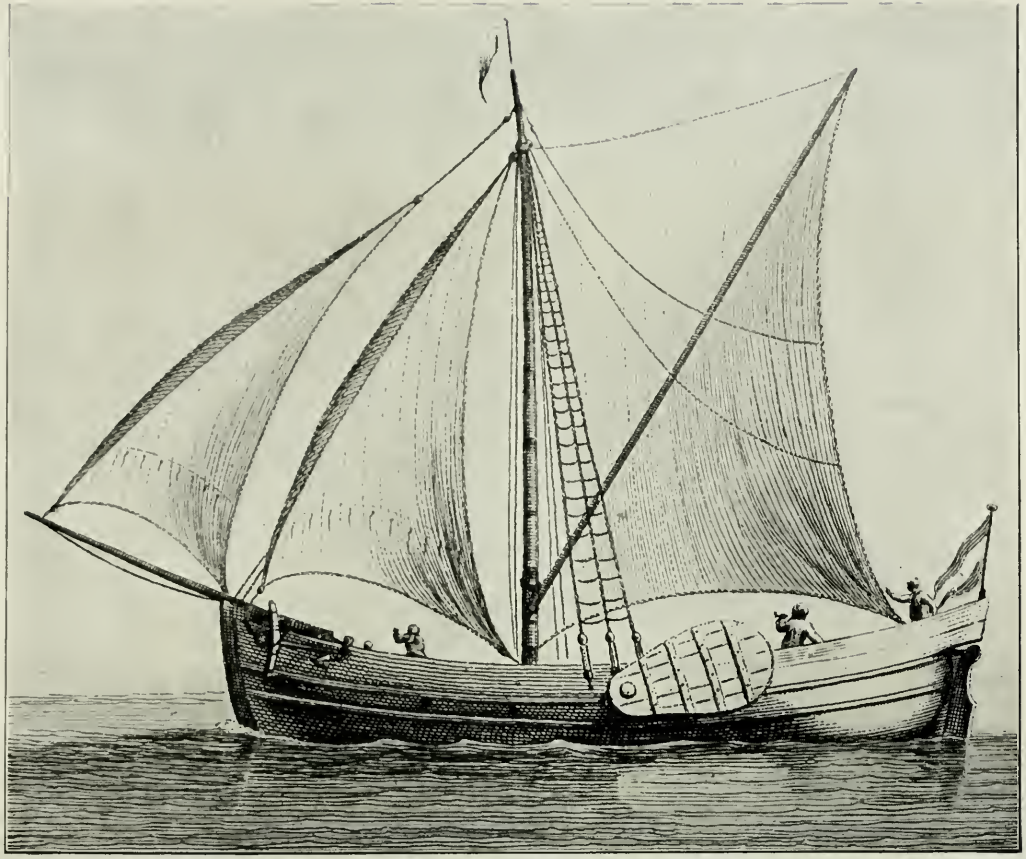
[3] "September 23rd: We are presently very short of provisions in this city; our Council has sent to various places to procure a supply. November 21st: For some time there has been a great crush at the doors of our bakers; there are scarcely any provisions here" (*Lettres d'un bourgeois Nantais*, 1793–5. Supplied by M. Lionel Bonnemère to the *Revue Rétrospective*, 1902.

these privations their slender budget showed a deficit, and the cost per head reached thirty-two sous a day, which the authorities refused to pay.[1]

A coincidence is to be noted. On October 8th and 9th Carrier made a stay at Nantes, on his way to the army; no doubt there was submitted to him the vexatious case of these ravenous priests, whose maintenance overburdened the finances of the Department.[2] Two days later the order was given to shift these "useless mouths" to one of the vessels in the harbour. There was great consternation at the Little Capucines. The captives recalled the tortures they had endured before on board the *Therèse*, and Abbé Douaud drew up in their name the following petition: "Almost all the prisoners are men of sixty or infirm; they are worn out by their confinement. To huddle them up at the beginning of the bad season on a vessel anchored in the Loire means to inflict on them a cruel increase of suffering. In the convent they occupy they are at least under cover; may they not hope

[1] "M. Douaud's 'statement of accounts' begins thus: 'June 6, 1792, 86 priests at supper, 48 lbs. of bread'" (*Le Clergé Vendéen*, by Abbé A. Barraud, i. 176).

[2] Letter from Abbé Douaud to the Department. Departmental records of Loire-Inférieure, document quoted by M. Lallié, *Histoire de la persécution des prêtres noyés*, p. 144.



they will be kept there if they are still refused their liberty ?" [1]

The Council of the Department allowed itself to be persuaded. On October 16th it sent on the letter to the municipality, which on the 17th likewise gave its verdict against sending these old men and invalids to a vessel. But on the 20th Carrier came back from Cholet, victorious and exultant. On the 25th, annulling decisions of the Department and the Commune, the Revolutionary Committee, wholly at the bidding of the triumphant representative whose authority in a few days had become predominant, decreed the transfer of the priests to the Dutch galliot [2] *La Gloire* lying in the Loire, off the Sécherie.[3] That same day the allowance of twenty-five sous was withdrawn.[4] The measure was a saving, and besides flattered —the sequel of the story will prove this superabundantly—a notion dear to Carrier, though

[1] The text of the letter is given by M. Lallié, *Persécution des prêtres*, p. 147.

[2] This did not mean a vessel of Dutch ownership. The name was applied to a large fishing vessel with a square mainsail and having two triangular jibs forward. In the *Traité général des Pêches de Duhamel du Monceau* (1769–82) a "Dutch galliot" or "sprek" is depicted (vol. ii. part 2, § 3, cut v.).

[3] The Sécherie was a pumping-engine, used for grinding corn, steaming and *drying* cereals to preserve them (*Annales Nantaises*, year III., p. 648).

[4] Lallié, *Histoire de la persécution des prêtres noyés*, p. 150.

in his mind it had remained no more than a plan. More than a month before, when he was at St. Malo, a district "on the sea-board," having sent on board a vessel a number of priests and nuns, he had confided the command of it to Heron, with orders to carry out what he termed a "radical deportation." Heron, a bloodthirsty madman, grasped his meaning, but English cruisers blocked the Malo Roads and he thought it wise not to put out. The prisoners were carried to Mont St. Michel, and Carrier deferred his essay in "radical deportation." [1]

The transfer of the priests took place on October 28th. From the Little Capucines to the Sécherie the way was not long; the sloping gardens of the convent led down to the quay,[2] and it was easy to avoid exposing the pitiable procession to the sympathy of passers-by. All the same, certain of the faithful, having got information, had gathered on the route of the holy fathers. The tradition has been handed down that when they were seen to appear on the terraces one of the able-bodied, Abbé de Meyracq,[3] whose family lived at Nantes, chanted

[1] Letter from Carrier of October 7th (Aulard, *Recueil des actes du Comité de Salut Publie*, viii. 286).

[2] *Annales Nantaises*, year III., p. 648.

[3] He was forty-three, having been born at Nantes in the Place du Change, in 1750 (*Le Clergé Vendéen*, by Abbé A. Barraud).

during the transit in a loud and confident voice, Father de Montfort's psalm—

> "My trust, my trust is laid,
> Virgin, in thy strong help."[1]

A mere perusal of the list of captives will enable one to imagine the descent of this band, lengthened out, according to the strength of each: their shaking heads, grey hairs, bent figures, tottering legs. One was a Capucine of eighty, Father Kermoran; another in the same decade, Abbé Lemercier, priest of Guérande; a vicar in Nantes, well known by the whole city, Abbé Fleuriau, seventy-nine years of age; the former rector of Gorges, M. Dugast, had also told seventy-eight years. Two were helpless, Abbés Briand and Lamarre; while another, Abbé Leroy, though young, hobbled on two crutches. Ninety of them in all, carrying under their arms all they owned in small parcels—supporting, helping each other, urged on by the soldiers, hurried by Commissary Viau, who was in charge of the embarkation. Then the mustering of the miserable band along the quay, its difficult scramble into wherries tossed by the waves, the shocks and buffetings, the transport in groups towards the

[1] *Le Clergé Vendéen*, by Abbé A. Barraud, i. 288.

galliot, up the sides of which awkward shapes are seen from a distance painfully mounting, to be seized by men at the bulwarks, and disappear at once, swallowed by the 'tween-decks.

The hatches being re-closed, a guard of soldiers was placed on board the galliot.[1] How did the priests live, packed so closely in this floating prison? Who fed them? There are signs to show that daring Nantais managed to slip on board and take them victuals; it is known that at least one woman came habitually to bring food to one of the captives,[2] and assuredly this was not an isolated instance. But officially no further mention is made of them. They were not forgotten, however. From the beginning of October two creatures of Carrier's, Foucaud the cooper, and Lamberty the coach-builder, went towards eight in the evening to saunter in the direction of the Sécherie.[3] The Loire in this suburb of the town

[1] *Bulletin*, &c., vi., No. 98, p. 402 (the paging is often faulty). Deposition of Binet, commander of a battalion and a district at Nantes, on the order he received to withdraw the guard from the galliot.

[2] "A woman had come as usual to bring victuals to one of the prisoners" (Deposition of Sourisseau, merchant, *Bulletin*, &c., vi., No. 96, p. 383).

[3] The mill of the Sécherie was outside the town. In the *Bulletin* (vi., No. 71, p. 282) a woman named Pichot is described as living at the Sécherie, near Nantes.

COURTYARD OF THE OLD ENTREPÔT AT NANTES.

(Present State.)

To face Page 43.

was fringed with a continuous line of sheds and warehouses belonging to various ship-owners. To get afloat or ashore you had to pass through one of these warehouses, opening on one side to the street, and on the other to the river. In the daytime, while loading or unloading was going on, passage was free, but at night they shut the warehouses, and each was guarded by a watchman who lived there. Foucaud and Lamberty, in order that they might have easy access at all times to the water-side, applied to citizen Sourisseau, porter of one of these private storehouses, and called on him in the name of the Representative to secure a passage for them, "with a view to an expedition." Sourisseau, after some protests, handed them a key to his "gate." [1]

Foucaud and Lamberty were in search of a "gabare," the local name for a sort of flat-bottomed lighter, roughly put together in deal planks, which serves to take down to Paimbœuf the cargo intended for vessels of high tonnage, and which, owing to the silting up of the

[1] "Foucaud came at eight in the evening to order me, in the name of Carrier, to leave the doors open for an expedition. I gave a second key to open at need. . . . Two days later Foucaud came back; he told me that he did not mean the door to be closed, he wanted it open" (Deposition of Sourisseau, *Bulletin*, vi., No. 96, p. 383).

Loire, cannot get up the river as far as Nantes.[1] Having found the vessel and bought it for 200 livres,[2] Carrier's two emissaries went during one of the following nights to a shipwright named Baudet, to whom they were not known,[3] and called on him in the name of the law to supply workmen to open ports in the side of their "gabare." They alleged that it was to be taken up one of the affluents of the Loire, where it would be "sunk," in order thus to close the passage against the rebels' forces.[4] Baudet unsuspectingly told off five of his workmen,[5] who at once took the job in hand. Berthé the carpenter, watching them at work, was surprised at the square holes pierced in the bottom of the "gabareau," in such a way as to let in great bodies of water.[6] Citizeness Pichot, who kept a pothouse at the Sécherie, becoming curious like Berthé, asked the carpenters what they were doing there. One of

[1] "Gabares range as a rule from 50 to 200 tons" (*Annales Nantaises*, year III., p. 649).

[2] Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 13.

[3] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 96, p. 382. Affidavit by Baudet, shipwright at Nantes. "Two strangers came, and, in the name of the law demanded that I should supply them with workmen."

[4] *Bulletin*; same affidavit.

[5] Martin, Reféchet, Pied-Lachère, Cadioc, and Memiral (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 96, p. 382).

[6] Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 40.

them replied that he had no idea.[1] That was on the 8th or 10th of November.

From this consensus of testimony we gather that for a fortnight Foucaud and Lamberty gave all their attention to these preparations; the task was amply conned. They were not alone, be it said, in pondering it. Lamberty's "aides-de-camp," Lavaux for one, had been informed of "the great project"; Fouqué also, the caretaker, but lately drummed out of the National Guard; and Lalouet, moreover, the Parisian, and pretended cousin of Robespierre, who, decked in antique fashion with the name of Mucius Scævola, called himself an emissary of the Committee of Public Safety. All, as we have seen, belonged to that staff of "failures" who under the cloak of ardent patriotism had grouped themselves round Carrier as soon as the man of the Convention came on the scene.

Whenever one of these rapscallions, afoot in pursuance of the "plan," followed the quay of La Fosse as far as the Sécherie, where Baudet's joiners were hard at work, he could see, moored motionless in midstream, the galliot, beneath whose deck, huddled among rats and infection,[2] lay the old priests, whose

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., p. 283.

[2] "The dirt, the rats, and other inconveniences of an old

destruction they were contriving. To be able during a whole fortnight to chew the cud of such a conspiracy, to gloat all that time over the idea of the terrible scene, whose untold vicissitudes could not even be conceived beforehand, the acolytes of Lamberty must have needed a singular tenacity of premeditation. Not one of them felt a qualm, but all felt the vastness of the innovation, and were at pains to distribute the responsibility. The Revolutionary Committee aided them all it could—perhaps unwittingly. On November 5th it passed two decrees, one raising from thirty-five sous to three livres a day the pay of the National Guards;[1] the other requested the representatives to lay an embargo on vessels outward bound. This insured the docility of the accomplices, and the absolute interdiction of the harbour.

These measures had been taken during an absence of Carrier. That worthy left Nantes on November 1st and returned on the 5th, from Angers, where he had consulted with his colleagues. All was ready on his return, but

vessel, on which there was not even a convenient place to stow bread and provisions" (*Abrégé de l'histoire de la Révolution française*, by Abbé François Chevalier. MS. in the Nantes Library, Dugast-Matifeux Collection).

[1] Lallié, *J. B. Carrier*, p. 81, following the registers of the Revolutionary Committee.

the band preferred not to act without a formal and written order. Lamberty only obtained a "power" thus worded: "Permit citizens Fouquet and Lamberty to pass wherever there may be occasion, with a 'gabareau' laden with brigands, without any one being able to hinder or harass them in such transport."[1] Carrier signed this paper, the wording of which compromised no one. Lamberty and his comrades would have liked more definiteness, not out of scruple, certainly, but out of mistrustful prudence.

Carrier appeared at the Committee in the evening of the 15th and inquired about the priests embarked aboard the *Gloire*. "Have drastic measures been taken," he asked, "for their 'removal'?" Lamberty replied, "Don't you remember, then, it was I that you chose to do it?"[2] Carrier, finding himself implicated, fell into a rage—it was a way he had. After having fired off several volleys of oaths he withdrew, and Lamberty, thus authorised, fixed the matter for the next day.

On November 16th, when night had fully fallen, he proceeded to the Sécherie accompanied

[1] *Pièces remises par les Comités réunis à la Commission des Vingt-un, imprimées par ordre de la Convention nationale* (Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, Brumaire, year III.).

[2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 72, p. 285.

by Fouquet. Some men of the Marat Company escorted him, for they had to beware of the soldiers, and had induced adjutant-general Boivin, commanding the town, to withdraw the guard stationed on board the galliot.[1] Lamberty posted a sentinel at Dame Pichot's wine-shop to watch the quay, and made off with the rest of his band. Some moments later the hostess saw through the night the barge gliding along the water, a broad and deep coffin, which from their "bachots" the boatmen were guiding towards the galliot.[2]

They range alongside, and Fouquet, Lamberty, Foucaud, and the others climb on board. How many of them are there? Who gave the order? No one knows. It is impossible to unravel from the abundance of testimony how the perpetrators shared the work between them. No picture that we can form for ourselves could exceed the tragedy of that moment, the attitude of these men coming in cold blood and without instructions to commit

[1] "I was not called upon to supply armed men for the drowning. I merely received the order to withdraw the guard from the galliot, to be relieved by an armed body which would be marched there by Fouquet and Lamberty, and the order was signed Boivin" (evidence of Binet, commanding a battalion and the district. *Bulletin*, vi., No. 98, p. 402).

[2] Sworn evidence of the woman Pichot, born Victoire Abraham.

the craftiest and most deliberate of murders upon this herd of old men, sick and crippled, whom no tribunal had condemned to death. There must have been a warder on the galliot. What pretext did they use to get him to hand over the prisoners? No doubt a fictitious order of removal. Who had the effrontery to descend first into the 'tween-decks where the poor wretches lay, or to awake and warn them? We only know that to avert all resistance, however improbable, they had received beforehand, in view of a fresh transfer, an invitation to place their watches, money, and whatever they valued most in the hands of the commandant. These articles, they were assured, would be given back to them at the manor-house of La Musse, at Chantenay, whither they were to be taken.[1] Thanks to this warning, when the captives saw Lamberty and his myrmidons appear in the 'tween-decks, they told themselves that their transfer was now going to take place.

At that very hour Carrier honoured with his presence the opening of the new "habitation" of the People's Society, which that evening took up its abode at the Church of St. Croix.[2] He

[1] *Abrégé de l'histoire de la Révolution française*, by Abbé Chevalier. MS. in Library at Nantes; Dugast-Matifeux Collection.

[2] Lallié, *J. B. Carrier*, p. 82.

ascended the pulpit and began a harangue, showing that "all the evils which beset the human race issued from the throne or the altar." Presently he spoke of the Massacres of St. Bartholomew, and becoming inspired by the subject, was taken with one of those fits of morbid or cunningly planned frenzy which lent to his wild eloquence the accent of Pythia on her tripod. He seemed to hear the *manes* of a million of slaughtered victims "inciting to national vengeance against the priests." He questioned his conscience touching the scandalous orgies of the sellers of masses, and the shameful means they employed to tyrannise over the people and firmly rivet its chains. The absurd mummeries of these despicable lackeys of kings were only calculated to bring customers to their shop and make their calling profitable.[1] In this way he flogged his factitious wrath against those whom at that moment his instruments were huddling into the fatal barge; not that he had any occasion to silence his pity, but that he desired the approbation of his hearers, who did not know the facts. Everything must be provided against. If, next day, Nantes should learn through some clumsiness of the odious

[1] *Séance de la Société populaire.* Eight printed pages, quoted by Lallié, after the copy in the Lemoignon Collection.

hecatomb and cry out and rebel, the Proconsul would shelter himself hypocritically behind the applause with which his appeal had been received, and all the patriots of the People's Association would thus share his responsibility.

As it was, he was acclaimed, and applause broke out when he let slip a glimpse, as a measure of public utility, of an impending wiping out of "these fugitives who impoverish the city." He descended from the pulpit to the sound of revolutionary songs, and music augmenting the enthusiasm, "each man vented his desire to see the last of the priests exterminated." [1]

While his master was safeguarding himself in this fashion Lamberty was completing the work. Fouquet and Foucaud helped him, together with O'Sullivan the fencing-master. It is known also that Gauthier the cutler, a private in the Marat Company, was on board the galliot that night.[2] The names of the remainder are not known.

Lamberty brought the captives out of the

[1] *Procès Verbal* quoted.

[2] "In taking part in this drowning," said Foucaud, "I did no more than obey orders from above" (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 98, p. 402). O'Sullivan "admitted that he had been present at the drowning of the priests and at two others" (*Bulletin*, vii., No. 97, p. 399). The presence of Fouquet and Lamberty is attested by numerous witnesses. Gauthier's confession is to be found recorded in the *Nouvelles politiques* of Brumaire 27th, year III.

'tween-decks, two by two. They were searched,[1] deprived of everything of any value whatever, then tied one to another, and the couple thus trussed was let down into the barge moored alongside the galliot. Then two more were called. It was done politely, with excuses—"merely as a precaution," they said, "and in no way to incommode them."[2]

In the "gabare" they fell placidly into three rows. None of them had an inkling of imminent death. Still when M. Hervé de la Bauche, vicar of Machecoul, took his place he drew his neighbour's attention to the fact that the flat white stones lying at the bottom of the lighter in the guise of ballast hid holes by which water entered.[3] Another remarked that, as the craft seemed far from sound, they would do well to absolve each other. All thereupon took to their prayers and blessed each other piously.[4] The moon, now at its full, silvered in the distance the broad face of the

[1] Gauthier declares that on one of the priests he found twelve louis, which he handed to Lamberty (*Nouvelles politiques*, Brumaire 27th, year III.).

[2] MS. quoted by Abbé Chevalier, Dugast-Matifeux Collection.

[3] Mlle. de la Barre's story, recorded by Abbé Patarin. Supplied by M. Lallié.

[4] Same sources. These details have become known by the accounts of Abbé Landeau, whose adventure will be set forth further on.

river, which the ebb drew in great gurgling eddies towards the sea.

The cargo was complete. Lamberty, O'Sullivan, and Fouquet, in order to furnish escort to the barge, ensconced themselves with several "Marats" on a wherry, and at once the moorings were severed. Gauthier and Foucaud remained on board the galliot.[1] The heavy pine hull, carried by the retreating tide, got under weigh with the current, towing the wherry in which stood the drowners ready to direct the final manœuvre: it was about half after midnight.[2] They were scarcely a few cables' lengths from the galliot when, as the barge and its pilots were passing the floating battery *La Samaritaine*, a peremptory challenge rung out on the bright night. It came from the deck of the battery, where sentinels were posted. A voice from the boat sent up the reply, "Commander, we are coming on board!"[3]

Accordingly, the master-gunner of the pontoon —his name was Vailly—saw coming towards him the boat with eight men on board, among them Fouquet and Lamberty. These two

[1] "I remained, as did Foucaud, on board the galliot from which they had just been removed" (Gauthier's evidence. *Nouvelles politiques*, Brumaire 27th, year III.).

[2] Evidence of Vailly, gunner (*Pièces remises*, &c., p. 24).

[3] *Ibid.*

hoisted themselves on board, and the latter, explaining that he was in charge of a barge full of brigands, asked leave to pass. Vailly replied that, embargo being the order of the day, he could let no vessel pass along the river. Fouquet became angry, threatening to cut the insolent gunner to pieces, and protesting that he and his men were authorised to pass anywhere. But Vailly obstinately demanded that such authorisation should be shown him. Lamberty at length drew from his pocket Carrier's order, and the other, on reading it, insisted no longer.[1]

He and Fouquet then sprang into their boat and bade the rowers catch up the barge. A moment later Vailly, still on the watch, saw the latter pass slowly in the dim light by his battery.[2] No sound proceeded from this great ark, gliding down the meandering stream. Doubtless the bound priests were collecting their thoughts and praying. Borne by the stream, it floated down the river in touch with the executioners' wherry. In a few moments it had passed Trentemoult, which is on the left bank; had left Chantenay on the right, and entered the vast basin above Cheviré Island, where the river,

[1] Vailly's affidavit (*Pièces remises*, &c.).

[2] "The persons manning the boat and the float containing the folks passed under the guns of the hulk, where I was on guard" (Vailly's evidence, *Pièces remises*, &c.).

spreading like an inlet, is 1700 feet in breadth.[1] This was the suitable spot.

Lamberty's men, with heavy blows from mallets, then opened the ports;[2] the rushing waters burst in torrents into the barge, while at the same time they began to roar at the bottom, displacing the tufa blocks which served as ballast.[3] From the passengers, as yet silent, a clamour arose. The hapless wretches were heard struggling and calling for help. One of the soldiers that manned the boat, being somewhat of a wag, boarded the barge and crept to the centre. The victims, now on their feet, were jostling each other, the water being already to mid-leg. Eager to add insult to the frightful death-struggle which was beginning, the man pretended to bale the water, using as scoop a chestnut-roaster full of holes. The farce over, he came up and got back to his boat which was already sheering off, so as not to be

[1] For these data, and those like them that will be found further on in the course of the volume, I have used the maps of the Surveying Branch of the Navy, especially map 5256 (*Le Cours de la Loire de Nantes à la Mer*).

[2] "Violent blows with a mallet had burst the plug" (*Notices sur les confesseurs de la foi dans le diocèse de Nantes*, by Abbé Briand).

[3] "These tufa blocks being disturbed, the water flowed in freely, and from that moment all hope of deliverance vanished" (*Histoire de la Révolution*, by Abbé Chevalier. MS. in the Nantes Library, Dugast-Matifeux Collection).

dragged down in the coming whirl, and the barge, now left to itself, logged by the inflowing waters, went its way in the night down-stream, slowly settling down as it went. She was already out of sight when, in the deep silence, a long-drawn cry arose from the horizon where her black outline was vanishing, an outcry of heartrending anguish, which suddenly died down. All was silent, extinguished, swallowed up.[1]

The deed was done! A few strokes of the oar brought the boat to the spot where the lighter had sunk. Here and there black forms tossed by the eddies still struggled and strove desperately. The boat gave chase to them; a few blows with boat-hooks or with the sweeps, and in a moment or two all was over. As far as eye could see nought floated on the vast reaches of the river.[2]

"Ah, b——s! Now's the time; show us a miracle!" snarled Lamberty in glee.[3]

The perpetrators made for the bank, and

[1] "Thanks to the stillness of the night, I heard piercing cries from the direction of the boats which had lately left me, and realised fully . . . that they were those of the parties confined in the lighter, whom they were thus killing in the most savage manner" (Vailly's evidence, *Pièces remises*, &c.).

[2] "Some only were above water, and contending simultaneously with the waves and with armed men, who pursued them in boats, beat at them with boat-hooks and oars, and drove them under water again" (*Notices*, by Abbé Briand).

[3] O'Sullivan heard this speech (MS. note by M. Lallié).

went back to the town. The old houses of the Fosse, which still stand storied and grey, saw that night in November this group of ill-looking men go past them chatting calmly and parting at the street corners with good-nights and hand-shakings, like companions going home from a party. It may even be that on reaching home they slept!

Carrier, for his part, stayed up late as usual. No doubt he was waiting till Lamberty should return and give him an account of how things had gone. During the morning of the 17th the members of the Departmental Council and the Municipality paid a visit to the mansion of the Convention to discuss with him the serious matter of means of subsistence, but were not admitted. At their second visit, after waiting an hour and a half, they saw the Proconsul who, having gone to bed at three in the morning, had slept late and was bathing a sore place on one of the fingers of his right hand in a glass of fresh water held respectfully by his valet.[1] He received the authorities of Nantes in his usual fashion.

"Is that anything to me, b—— it? You want to make a foist on me, b—— it!"

[1] Minutes of the Council of the Department (Archives of Loire-Inférieure, quoted by Lallié, *J. B. Carrier*, p. 90).

Citizen Dufo, a municipal officer, took courage to insist. "Last year," rejoined Carrier, "I rode a she-ass that could argue better than you." And by way of farewell he added, "You are a pack of b——s."[1]

It was not ill-temper, for he had reason to be pleased. The drowning had gone off well, though not perfectly; for there still remained something more to achieve. Thus he learned that three of the priests, having succeeded in undoing their bonds, had escaped death. One had been saved by a fisherman, while the current had carried the other two to the bank.[2] All three had been picked up by the men of the *Imposant* and were on board that ship, lying in Lavigne Harbour. The trouble, to be sure, was of the smallest; the Revolutionary Committee had only to claim the three priests of Captain Laflerie, in command of the *Imposant*. A fellow named Racau brought them back to the galliot, and all that was necessary was to throw them back into the water next morning.[3] More

[1] Minutes of the Council of the Department.

[2] M. Thomas Lacombe, rector of Corsept, aged sixty-eight; M. Joseph Brianceau, incumbent of the parish of Ste. Croix at Nantes, aged sixty-eight; and probably, according to M. Lallié's researches, M. le Paludier.

[3] Evidence of Pierre Fournier, a veteran, acting lieutenant-colonel in charge of the district of Cours du Peuple (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 71, p. 281).

by token, Foucaud took advantage of his luck to take possession, before the plunge, of the foot-gear of one of them, and thus became master of a good pair of shoes, in which he paraded, and which long served his turn in wear.[1]

There was another hitch more serious. Whether the ports had been too widely opened, or that, being dashed against some sandbank, the fragile lighter had been damaged, that craft had not, as was desired, retained the corpses, but, borne by the current, they were drifting at the mercy of the waves. A fisherman picked up in the tideway a book, a basket, a small box full of butter, and five hats which "lacked the tricolour cockade."[2] A drowned man was found on the sand, near the Basse Indre, and instantly buried.[3] Another floated as far as Lavau.[4] At Chantenay, on November 19th, the rising tide left on shore the body of an old man about seventy-five, clad in a Capucine habit, and six others in knee-breeches, cassocks,

[1] He had them still, according to his own showing, a year later, at the time of the trial (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 98, p. 402).

[2] Evidence of Binet, commanding a battalion (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 98, p. 401).

[3] Certain inhabitants of La Bernardière, on the outskirts of Clisson, came to the conclusion that the body was that of their vicar, M. de Meyracq (*Le Clergé Vendéen*, by Abbé Barraud, vol. i. p. 289).

[4] It is believed that it was the body of M. François Couvrant, incumbent of Besné (Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 154).

and black stockings. The body of a man of eighty was recognised as that of M. Fleuriau, incumbent of St. Jean at Nantes. One whom they did not succeed in identifying had the left hand torn off. The victim, seeking to rid himself of his bonds, had only mutilated himself.[1]

These grim jetsoms were noised abroad, and Nantes was no longer ignorant of the drowning; but as no man protested, this general silence might be taken as approbation, and from that point of view the success of the experiment was complete.

Hence it was no longer a time for disguises. No later than the 17th Lamberty called together those of his men who had taken part in the *baignade*, and announced that he had received 300 livres to pay for drinks for them.[2] On Tuesday the 19th the galliot was brought alongside the quay towards six in the evening; Foucaud himself superintended her mooring opposite Sourisseau's warehouses.[3] To allow free access he begged their pro-

[1] These seven bodies were interred at Chantenay by the constitutional incumbent of that place, who entered the interment in his parish register.

[2] Gauthier's evidence (*Nouvelles*, Brumaire 27th, year III.).

[3] "The vessel was brought in and laid alongside my quay one Tuesday, about five or six in the evening, and at half-past eight the man Foucaud the younger, who was one of those who had moored the vessel . . ." (evidence of Citizen Pierre Sourisseau; *Pièces remises*, &c.).

prietor to leave his door open all through the night. The suggestion by no means pleased Sourisseau. However, as Foucaud declared that he was acting on Carrier's orders, he was given a key to the warehouse, on condition of locking the door every time he came in or went out.

Sourisseau made inquiries as to this galliot which was being moored at his quay, and Foucaud quite frankly replied that she had harboured the "despatched" priests and was full of their cast-off chattels.

"So much property for the nation," he remarked.[1]

Wednesday and Thursday went by without any other incident than the arrival of a woman who, as was her habit, brought food from the town for one of the prisoners. Sourisseau heard her being sent away brutally. "Get out of this! They don't want anything more."[2]

During the night of the 21st the warehouseman heard a knocking at his door. Foucaud and Lamberty came and asked his leave to keep the door of his shed open. Sourisseau, not at all understanding this persistence, tried to reason with them through the window; but

[1] Sourisseau's evidence.
[2] *Idem.*

Lamberty, who had no argument but one, cried, "Get in, or I'll plant you three bullets in the brain." Whereupon the other agreed to give them free passage, yet kept a watch on the mysterious doings of the two worthies. They seemed very busy. A boatswain's mate named Arreteau, watchman at an iron warehouse belonging to Citizen Margerin, also kept his eye on them, a fact which seemed to disturb them. Some "Marats" then appeared, and discussed whether they should not get rid of Arreteau by cutting off his head or throwing him into the water. However, they contented themselves with seizing him and dragging him to the guardhouse. Then at once the work began. Sourisseau saw them dragging the belongings of the priests from the galliot, and piling them up in Margerin's shed. This booty must have been important, for the tramping to and fro between galliot and shed went on till three in the morning. Their housing ended, Arreteau was allowed to go back into his house.[1]

Three or four days later Foucaud reappeared, bringing twelve empty puncheons on handcarts. In these he stowed all the belongings

[1] The name is variously spelt Heurtaud, Artau, and Arreteau. The man was killed a little later in an encounter with the Vendeans (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 96, p. 383; and *Pièces remises*, &c.).

of the drowned men, loaded the casks on the carts, and went off with the lot. Lamberty came on the scene when there was nothing left.[1] Shocked at his comrade's lack of feeling, he flew into a passion, crying out that those b——s were "blasted thieves who had tricked him," but that he was planning an expedition "in which there was more than 20,000 livres to be made," and "that he would know how to choose his men better." As rumour had it that the booty in this first affair amounted to 40,000 frs.,[2] he went to complain to Carrier of the trickery of which he had been the victim. The Proconsul was not pleased.

"B—— it," he cried, "isn't it for those who did the work?"[3]

To compensate Lamberty he made him a present of the galliot, which was at once cleaned and put in repair. Arreteau the warehouseman, being already in the secret, was given the job. He told his neighbour Sourisseau later on, that on going down into the 'tween-decks "his hair stood on end with horror" on opening a forgotten trunk, in which were a cassock, an overcoat, and some shirts so

[1] Sourisseau's (or Sourissau) evidence. There are two sets of this. One will be found at page 75 of the Collection of *Pièces remises*, &c.; the other in the *Bulletin*, vi., No. 96, p. 383.

[2] *Courrier*, No. 362, p. 7. [3] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 78, p. 311.

drenched with blood that you could no longer tell their proper colour. He believed they were the garments of the three priests who, having escaped the "noyade," were brought back on board, and had been sabred and stripped before being thrown into the water, lest they should escape again.[1]

Lamberty, less easily scared than Arreteau, took it into his head, as soon as the vessel had been trimmed up, to offer an entertainment to his comrades on board.[2] The day being fixed, after a halt at a café near the market, where they were to meet Foucaud and young Robin,[3] all three proceeded on board to receive the guests. Carrier had promised to grace the dinner with his presence, and kept his word. It was a very merry feast!

[1] Sourisseau's evidence (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 96, p. 383; and *Nouvelles politiques*, Brumaire 26th, year III.).

[2] It is difficult to fix the exact date of this festivity. It took place "the day of the drowning," says Tronjolly, who was not asked to it (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 60, p. 236). "Three days later," declares Gauthier, who was one of those invited (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 94, p. 374). It has been also placed at "the end of Frimaire." What leads us to think it took place only a few days after the "noyade" (night of November 16th) is that Carrier, in the course of the repast, treated his guests to his letter to the Convention. It was written on the 17th, sent off at once, read in the Convention on the 28th, and published by the *Moniteur* on the 30th. The *Moniteur* would reach Nantes on December 5th or 6th. It is therefore prior to that date that we must fix the feast on board the galliot.

[3] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 72, p. 286.

There were a score of diners,[1] including the Proconsul, who presided, with Lamberty on his right and Lalouet, Robespierre's sham cousin, on his left; Robin, O'Sullivan, Foucaud, Gauthier, Fouquet, who were the drowning party; and also Sandrock, who worked at the military carting. Lamberty recounted the details of the "sousing," and dwelt at length on the skill with which he had sabred those of the black gentry who tried to save themselves by swimming.[2] Carrier, carried away by enthusiasm, opened his arms and gave him the accolade, declaring him the best of revolutionaries.[3] As he drank hard, according to custom, he was in high spirits and poured out witty sayings; for instance, he called the Loire "the black-coats' great drinking cup."[4]

When they had eaten their fill they began to play pranks; some of the guests rigged themselves out in such cassocks and wigs of priests as they found on board, a travesty which, in such a place, seemed to them specially diverting. The Proconsul, wishing to show off before his lieutenants both his diplomacy and how jovially

[1] Such is the number as stated by Sandrock.

[2] Sandrock's evidence (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 85, p. 339). "All those present applauded for fear of being drowned," adds Sandrock. "I shivered with horror."

[3] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 94, p. 374.

[4] *Id., ib.*, vi., No. 93, p. 370.

familiar he was with his colleagues of the Committee of Public Safety, drew a paper from his pocket and said, "I will show you what I have written to the Convention."[1] He then read out a passage from a letter he had sent to Paris the very day after the "noyade."

"*An incident of a novel kind* seems to have succeeded in lessening the number of priests; ninety of those whom we describe as refractories were confined in a boat on the Loire. I have just learnt, and the source is a very sure one, that they have all perished in the river." You may imagine the "bravos!" the "very clever's!" and "first rate's!" which greeted this announcement. This was, in fact, a notification to the Committee of Public Safety of what had been done. It could, as it pleased, realise or not the nature of the "incident" thus outlined. Its evasive wording allowed the occurrence, in case of blame, to be ascribed to the outcome of a mere shipwreck, and all the diners felt reassured. Their festivity ended with song; young Robin, the firebrand of the crew, knew one for which Carrier called.[2]

"Little b——, little revolutionary," he cried, "sing the 'Gamelle,' the 'Song of the Moun-

[1] *Nouvelles politiques*, Brumaire 27th, year III.
[2] Evidence of Robin (Buchez and Roux, xxxiv. p. 203).

tain.' " And Robin sang, to the tune of the "Carmagnole"—

> "Let us from the pipkin eat,
> Hey the hum! (*bis*)
> Let us from the pipkin eat,
> Hey, the cauldron's humming!"[1]

In a word, their enjoyment was complete. Only one thing was forgotten, and that was to pay the host for the dinner supplied. The bill amounted to 364 livres, and was still owing a year later.[2] All the sharers in this fraternal love-feast quitted it fully assured of impunity. None of them would tell tales, least of all their accomplice, the Loire. These strong men did not believe in ghosts; they felt fully convinced that none of the victims of the "incident" would issue from his nameless grave or from the clinging mud-beds of the river to narrate the story of their "taking off."

They reckoned wrongly.

[1] Library of the City of Paris, No. 3241, *Receuil de Chansons philosophiques*. The words of "The Pipkin" are by Pillet, a clerk in the Control Office. (Constant Pierre, *Hymnes et Chansons de la Révolution*.)

[2] *Journal des Lois*, Frimaire 11th, year III.

CHAPTER III

THE INCUMBENT OF SAINT LYPHARD

At that very hour one of the ninety priests, and one only, having escaped the "drowning," was wandering through the streets of Nantes in terror of being recaptured, and horrified at what he had witnessed. It was Abbé Julien Landeau, incumbent of Saint Lyphard.

When in his turn he had been taken out of the galliot, tied to an old monk and lowered into the lighter, he found that the rope which secured his arm to that of his fellow might easily be unfastened. The two united their efforts, got rid of the manacle, and waited anxiously.

From the motion of the lighter Abbé Landeau soon realised that the heavy craft was going down-stream. He heard the mallet blows which opened the ports; in gushing torrents the waters poured in, gurgling and unceasing, overwhelming in a mass the maddened and unwary victims, lifting them up and dashing them against each other in a terrible hubbub of cries, floating bodies, and suffocation.

The Abbé was a skilful swimmer: taking in tow the old man whom the ruffians' choice had made his brother in the death-struggle, he fought his way out of the dreadful turmoil. Groping in the murk of whirling water, and thrusting aside the contorted bodies, he reached a port-hole or scupper, and at length came out on the surface of the river. Lamberty's boat was there, quite close at hand. The priest of St. Lyphard's saw the ruffians grappling with their boat-hooks, and holding under water those quivering wretches whom, like himself, a desperate effort had carried out of the lighter, and heard the heavy blows of the oars falling on their heads. Escaping from the hideous mêlée, he swam with his right hand, and with the other upheld his inert fellow. Soon he was far away, in the full flow of the Loire, panting with exertion, alone on that heaving expanse. What should he do? Try to reach the bank? Would he not find there other ruffians on the alert, it might be, or timorous fishermen, who would refuse to help him? Or should he swim with the current as long as might be and ground in some osier-bed or on some sandbank, where he might take breath? And afterwards? Would he, for that matter, have strength to keep up so long? The weight of his fellow paralysed his

movements. In the icy water, which blinded and choked him, the old monk, groaning at his last gasp, urged the swimmer not to persist, but to save himself alone and let him die. Yet Landeau persevered, though each valiant stroke exhausted him, his strength began to fail, and his burden stopped all progress. He felt the clutching hands of the old man unclasp as he resignedly relaxed his hold, and, yielding to his fate, allowed himself to sink.[1]

Thus lightened, the Abbé found relief by floating on his back, and permitted the stream to carry him whither it would, when suddenly through the void and stillness a sound of voices reached his ears. He turned round in the water and saw the outline of a boat gliding through the night, and heard the men who manned it chatting among themselves. He struck out till he came alongside, seized the gunwale, and in an imploring voice begged for help. One of the men, astonished, leant over and asked him who he was.

"A priest that they have just thrown in to drown."

[1] It is from Abbé Landeau's own account that the recital of these occurrences has been preserved—a narrative recorded by his nephew, of the same name, incumbent of Muzillac, and published in *Notices sur les Confesseurs de la foi dans le diocèse de Nantes*, by Abbé Briand (vol. ii. p. 597 *et seq.*).

There was a brief consultation between the boatmen, while Landeau, all a-tremble, overheard their parley.

"Bah," said one, "he's a 'black cowl.' There will be enough of his kind left."

"My friends," cried another, "if he were an enemy's dog we should not consent to let him perish. Let us save him!" [1]

The swimmer was forthwith grappled, drawn from the water and hoisted on board the barge, but scarcely was he seated beside the boatmen than these rough men took fright at the half-dead man, dripping, shivering, and at the last gasp. Already the fame of Carrier was spreading baseness, as miasmas spread pestilence. After some debate the boatmen rowed towards the right bank, and landing, left the wretch on the sand, explaining that they had done enough for him, and that he would have to get out of the scrape without their help.

Thus left alone Abbé Landeau tried to find his bearings. In the middle of November the nights are long, and it was still very far from earliest dawn. He saw, however, that he had come to land near the hamlet of Roche Maurice, about a league down-stream from Nantes. Shivering with cold, almost naked, and faint-

[1] Narrative of Abbé Landeau, incumbent of Muzillac.

ing with hunger and weariness, the first thing he needed was to find a shelter. But to whom could he apply? Would not asking for help mean self-betrayal? No matter, he was at the end of his energies; approaching a hovel, he knocked, but the door remained closed. He dragged himself towards another dwelling. There his call was heard, some peasants received him with cordiality, and gave him clothes and food and seated him before a good fire. The Abbé began to breathe more freely; little by little the awful nightmare faded away. Dawn was approaching, what should be his next course? The peasants who had taken him in were growing alarmed; they too were frightened. They were glad, they said, to have succoured him, and would be still more so to keep him, but the villages were infested by patriots, and the next house which he had visited first, but which luckily had not been opened to him, was inhabited by one of the most ardent of these. M. le Curé must understand that, for his own sake as much as for that of his hosts, he could not stay where he was; every one must look to his own safety, so he must leave before daylight. For that matter they would not abandon him, their daughter went every day to Nantes to take the milk of her cows; she knew a

worthy woman there, Mme. Lamy, who, like the Abbé, came from Queniguen. No doubt she would be willing to shelter the priest for some days, and would busy herself with placing him in safety.

The incumbent of St. Lyphard thanked his hosts. They consented, out of charity, to let him keep a pair of breeches, a jacket, and some clogs; they furnished him with a basketful of vegetables and bade him adieu. Thus accoutred the priest was shown to the door, and with a wary and alert eye, trying to disguise his alarm and affecting the air of a market-gardener on his way to the city market, he took the road to Nantes.[1]

He reached the centre of the town without mishap, was received at Mme. Lamy's at the Port-au-vin, went to earth there, and from his refuge sent a letter to one of his brothers living

[1] We follow almost literally the narrative of Abbé Briand who, as we have said, himself followed that of Abbé Landeau, nephew of the hero. But we have also made great use of the information kindly communicated by Abbé Bonnet, present incumbent of St. Lyphard, who in his parish magazine has published a very interesting study of the life of his famous predecessor. We beg him to accept our respectful thanks for the zeal he was good enough to display in sifting for us local traditions and consulting original documents. We also owe the tribute of our gratitude to M. S. Loiret, former Judge of the Commercial Court of Nantes, Knight of St. Gregory the Great. M. Loiret, grandson of Mme. Lamy, with whom Abbé Landeau took refuge, has very kindly imparted to us the traditions of his family.

at Queniguen near Guérande, who came to Nantes, wearing the broad hat, the white jacket and loose breeches of the marshmen of the peninsula, to look for the incumbent, bringing with him an outfit like his own.[1] When, in order to leave the town, they had to pass the guard, Abbé Landeau, on whom that awful night had left its mark in a morbid timidity, took alarm at seeing soldiers grouped by the door of the guard-house. He was taken with a violent trembling that he could not check; he was like to be noticed and questioned, and would not be able to answer. His brother, who had kept his full presence of mind, pretended to be taking home a drunken man. He scolded his companion, pushed him about, gave a great cut with the whip on the quarters of the mule the Abbé was riding, and went off at a trot. The two fugitives thus cleared the dangerous passage without mishap.

The vicar of St. Lyphard spent the whole winter at Queniguen. It is a hamlet lying on the edge of salt-marshes. There he had two hiding-places, one in his brother's house, where he lay smothered under a truss of hay, and

[1] Following the traditions of the family of M. Loiret, it was Mme. Lamy who obtained for the incumbent a marshman's costume, got him out of the city, and saw him as far as Queniguen.

the other in a hollow west of the village. At night he went about the country bearing the consolations of his ministry to the faithful. No one in that secluded spot had an idea of what was going on in France.[1] Save for the patrols, who sometimes turned up unexpectedly to make a search at some farm that had been pointed out to the vigilance of the patriots, no stranger ventured into this haunt of the dead. Often enough the Abbé saw himself on the verge of being taken: he cherished an instinctive and only too well-founded terror of the "Blues." But none the less he went all over the Guérande district, carrying consolation to the dying or sprinkling the newly born. The record of baptisms was inscribed by means of a nail on a brass plate which was buried in some field, to be recovered in better days.[1]

One evening at Queniguen some peasants were gathered at the house of the curé's brother, to take part in a night mass which he was making ready to celebrate. He had already withdrawn the sacred vessels from their hiding-place and arranged the simple accessories, when some one took alarm at a sound of footsteps in the village. Beware! It was the Guérande National Guard.

[1] *Mémoires de Mme. la Marquise de La Rochejaquelein.*

In a moment the house was surrounded; the peasants hastily put the preparations for the rite out of sight, the candlesticks returned to their place on the chimney-piece, the chalice was stowed on the top of a dresser. As for the Abbé, he had rushed to the steps of the barn, reached his usual lurking-place, and slipped under the hay. The soldiers broke into the house, and called loudly for the "calotin" (frocked gentleman) they were harbouring. They rapped the walls with their butt-ends and rummaged the stable, making a great pother and threatening to burn everything. One of them, raising his eyes, saw the chalice perched on the top shelf of the dresser. What a surprise! He said nothing, but casting a glance to see that none of his comrades were watching, gave the incriminating article a shove with the tip of his musket, and hid it behind the bulge of the piece of furniture.

The search of the barn was meanwhile proceeding. The "Blues" sounded the piled-up forage with their sabres or bayonets, whose points more than once touched the fugitive. One of the soldiers discovered his presence in that way. The man slipped in among the hay, making believe to search vigorously, reached the priest, seized his arm, said in a low tone,

"Don't stir," and going back to his comrades assured them there was no one there, and that nothing remained for them but to withdraw.

Abbé Landeau was saved; but he could not reckon on the recurrence of such a piece of luck, all patriots not being so merciful as the National Guards of Guérande. For a long time he had been wishing to make his way to St. Lyphard, which he had not seen since his arrest in 1791. He knew that he was beloved there, and could devote himself to his parishioners without too much danger. Two brothers, Charles and Jean Deniaud, offered to receive him. The latter lived in the hamlet of Kerbriant, while the former had a small farm at Kergonan, both places scarcely a league from St. Lyphard, and remote from any main road.

St. Lyphard is a village of some importance, on the outskirt of the Grande Brière, a vast expanse of marsh, beneath which a druidical forest lies submerged, whose trees still stand unseen, buried in the slime up to their topmost boughs; and still bent, men say, by the breath of the west wind, which has not blown on them for over a thousand years. During two days only of the year the Brièrons—as the dwellers on the shore of this sea of mud are called—are authorised to rummage in the mire

and dig out these tree-trunks, twelve or fifteen centuries old, and as hard and black as ebony. During a week the people of La Brière are also licensed to extract peat from these vast swamps, which they retail in "turfs," a fuel in use throughout Lower Brittany. The rest of the time the folks fish in the ponds for leeches, eels, and pike, or busy themselves with rearing geese and cattle.[1] For La Brière is at once a sea and a grazing tract. In winter it is a lake four leagues in length and five in breadth, with little depth of water, without waves or ripples. In fine weather the soil dries somewhat, and sheep and cows can graze on it without sinking in too far. A stranger would run great risk in venturing upon this treacherous surface, but the Brièrons know its geography, and float over it with as much certainty as they can walk; so that it is not uncommon to see one of their punts apparently gliding over a green meadow, while close by comes a pedestrian, staff in hand, who seems to walk on the water. La Brière is like a congealed sea and, so to speak, without horizon. No scenery is more affecting in its melancholy; the eye is disconcerted by this boundless level, whose dimensions it cannot gauge, and

[1] To-day the Brièrons are employed in great numbers as workmen in the factories of St. Nazaire.

which, at eventide, assumes the aspect of a disc of lead bossed here and there with the black gnarlings of heaps of peat.

On the St. Lyphard side, at the promontory of Pierre Fendue, it is impossible to tell where solid ground finishes and marsh begins. The "Blues," as may be imagined, did not venture on to this quaking area, which for a native well versed in its treacheries offered the safest of hiding-places. A hundred metres from the verge a man lying on the grass of this watery steppe is invisible. Abbé Goujon, vicar of St. Lyphard, who had remained in those parts since the outbreak of the Revolution, thanks to his perfect knowledge of the marsh, had thrown out all pursuers. M. Landeau was delighted to see him once more and to share his life of adventure.

Whenever the approach of a patrol was signalled they took to the marsh, made for a pile of turfs or a field of reeds, crouched there, and remained till the soldiers were gone. In winter the curé went back to the house of the brothers Deniaud, or mayhap sought a refuge less distant from La Brière. One of his parishioners, Jean Lebeau, who had sent one of his boys to the Vendean army, acted as his guide. Followed at a distance by the priest he

would go up to a house, knock at the window and ask, "Are there any strange sheep in the fold?"

Such was the catchword agreed upon. The peasants answered "yes" or "no" as it might be; in the latter case the door was opened, and the curé found a refuge for the night either among the hay or in the pig-shed, unless for greater safety they opened for him the double bottom of the manger, usually standing in the living room, and in which they put fodder for the beasts, who from the adjoining stable thrust their horned heads through great holes made in the panel, so as to get at the crib. Some of these old houses are still to be shown at Kerloumet in the St. Lyphard district. They have huge roofs thatched with La Brière rushes, and embellished to the ridge with a pretty plant bearing pink cups and called "birds' vine." They show you also in the village, cheek by jowl with the house of the present vicar, the old vicarage in which Abbé Landeau lived, a decent old cottage built of grey stone and with narrow windows. Not seldom during the course of his roving life must he have cast a glance of regret and longing at that rustic abode which once was his own. He was destined never to enter it again.

The Terror had long since come to an end,

PART OF THE OLD VICARAGE OF ST. LYPHARD.

(Present State.)

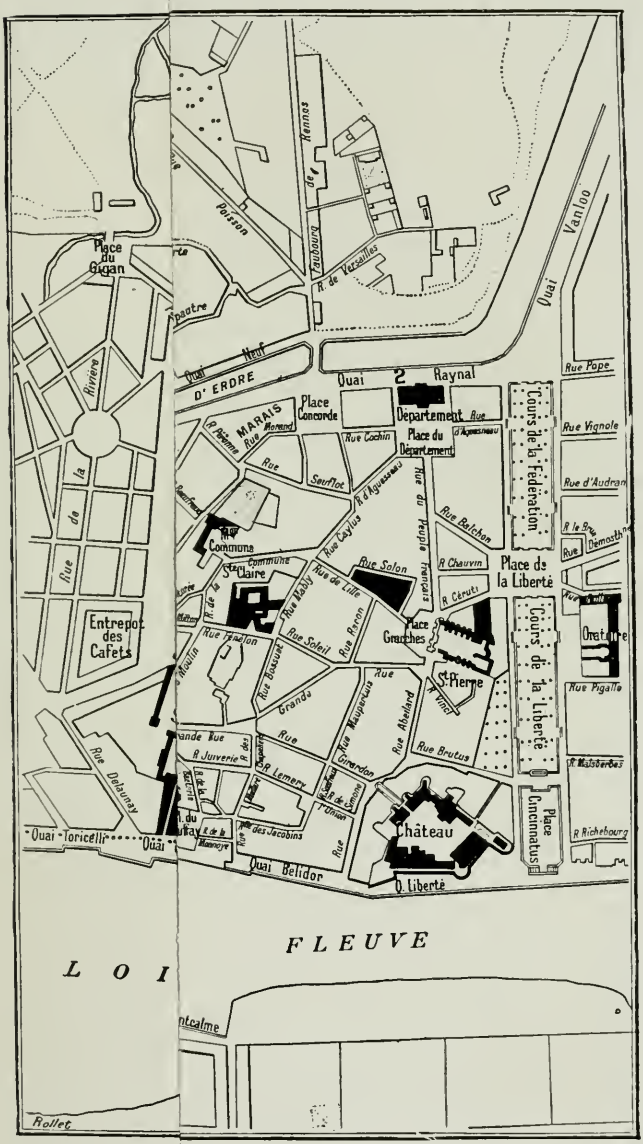
To face Page 80.

but non-juring priests were still outlawed. Incessant dread, misery, and nights spent in the marsh broke down the vigorous health of the vicar of St. Lyphard. He died, tended by his faithful curate, at Charles Deniaud's on June 24, 1799, aged fifty-five. His flock, who were not unaware of his story and looked on this sole survivor of the drowning of the priests as a miracle, wished ardently to keep his remains in the village cemetery. But Kernogan, where his death took place, is in the district of Guérande, so it was to Guérande that his body would be carried and thrown into the common ditch, according to the regulations then in force. To avoid such profanation they played a last trick with the Abbé in his death; they carried his corpse by night to the hamlet of Crutier, scarcely a hundred metres from Kernogan, but forming part of the Commune of St. Lyphard. It was laid, so the story runs, in the bed of an old man at death's door, whom they carried off to Kernogan, where he died. The exchange having been thus effected, the common ditch of Guérande was not deprived of a body, while the cemetery of St. Lyphard resumed its rights to that of Abbé Landeau.

Hence it was that the death was announced

at Crutier,[1] and the priest buried close to his old church. When in more recent times that church was pulled down and the cemetery removed, they laid his honoured remains in the chapel of the new God's acre. That chapel is a sort of grotto, excavated under a bluff surmounted by a Calvary. Abbé Landeau's grave adjoins that of M. Goujon, his curate and successor. From the crest of the bluff, which you mount by a steep path, the eye ranges over the whole of La Brière, which begins at this point. The vicar of St. Lyphard—his memory will live as long as men remember the "noyades" of Nantes—lies on the margin of this sleeping ocean, a sea without flood, or tide, or current, as if the element to which Carrier committed his victims here shared the eternal repose of the priest whom the Loire refused to receive.

[1] "This day, Messidor 7th, of the year VII. of the French Republic, one and indivisible, there appeared before me, Pierre Jubé, officer for the said Commune of St. Lyphard, in the canton of Herbignac, Julien Deniaud, labourer, aged fifty, who declared to me that Julien Landeau, priest, departed this life at the village of Crutier, in this commune, at the age of fifty-four. Consequent on this declaration I proceeded to the cemetery of St. Lyphard, to the place where they interred the said Julien Landeau, in the presence of the said Julien Deniaud and Jean Malenfant. We, the registrar, thereupon on the spot entered the present attestation on both the registers" (*Archives de la Mairie de St. Lyphard*).



I.
II. COMMITTEE HELD THEIR SITTINGS.
III.

To face Page 82.

Place Aguillaume
Place Buffon
Place Louis
Place Graslin
Place Royale
Place Delorme
Place Cambronne
Place Sainte
Place de la Liberté
Place de la Fédération
Place Nationale
Place Bouffay
Place Duquesne
Place Duchesne
Place Rouillard
Place Mellinet
Place Dumoulin
Place Dubuisson
Place Dumoulin
Place Dumoulin
Place Dumoulin

CHAPTER IV

THE COMMITTEE AT WORK

At the sometime Building of the Cour des Comptes of Brittany,[1] at that date quite new, being only sixteen years old, there sat in the year III. the administrators of the Department, the District and the Revolutionary Committee. On the metope of its heavy façade the cypher of the Republic and the Phrygian cap had replaced the arms of France.[2] In the superb vestibule, and on the fine staircase with its double balustrade, moved to and fro incessantly the "Marats," the messengers and spies of the Committee, informers, suspects guarded by soldiers, and patrols dragging their misused captives brought in from Vendée or elsewhere.

On Wednesday, December 4, 1793, in the old Great Hall, stripped of its hangings, but still sumptuous nevertheless, and which now served as a place of meeting for the Directory

[1] At the present day the Prefecture.

[2] *Annales Nantaises*, by Michel Guimar, year III. of the Republic, p. 633.

of the Department, the authorities of the city were assembled, together with the more stable revolutionaries. Minée, the unfrocked bishop, and President of the Department, was there, and also Administrators Petit, Kermen, Gicqueau, and Coffirant; Renard, mayor of Nantes, and such influential members of the Revolutionary Committee as Goullin, Louis Naux, Bachelier, Perrochaud, Lévêque, Pierre Guillet, and Proust, as also a deputation from the patriots of the People's Society, among them Forget, Robin, Richard, and others. It is five o'clock, and night is falling. They are waiting for Carrier, whom no one has seen during the fortnight following the drowning of the priests, and who since that crime has gone to earth in his mansion in Little Holland. The Proconsul had gone out for the first time on the previous night when he showed himself at the People's Society, declaring that "all was going wrong," and that it was the fault of the administrative bodies. Yes, everything *was* going wrong, sure enough. The Vendean army, Angers being taken, threatened Nantes; want was imminent in the city, typhus prevailed in the prisons, and the prisoners were dying of hunger. The carelessness of the administrators, paralysed by fear, the interference in affairs of marplots and incapables

were indeed the causes of this disastrous state, and Carrier was coming to shake them out of their torpor.

He appeared an hour late. As usual he looked contemptuous and disgusted, a curl of bitterness about his lips, terrible in spite of his frail appearance, his lean body encased in a furred great-coat with a high collar, his black hair in confusion, gold rings in his ears, and his gestures fraught with desperation. He took his place, and sulkily began with recriminations.

"I do not know by what fatality, but I seem constantly to have to complain of you. I will certainly tell you my motives, but pray what are yours?"

Seeing that his hearers were intimidated,[1] he threatened to throw up everything. "If we cannot agree, and the public interest demands it, let us part company. The Convention will send a representative who is more of a patriot."[2]

Forget, the bankrupt, a sans-culotte of mark and keeper of the prison of the Stes. Claires, who often saw the Representative at his table

[1] "Everybody was held in check by terror" (*Notes*, by Bachelier, President of the Revolutionary Committee of Nantes. Nantes Library, Dugast-Matifeux Collection).

[2] Minutes of the sitting (*Archives de la Loire-Inferieure*). I follow Comte Fleury (*Carrier à Nantes*, p. 104).

and used to speak his mind freely to him—for which reason he was dubbed the Grand Lama—alone ventured to reply.

"I told the People's Society that if the machine was working badly it was because Citizen Carrier refused to consult with the Administration."

"You shall have your wish," the Proconsul rejoined. "I will see you more often and we will take useful measures together."

The discussion soon turned to hypocritical sentimentality: some confidential speeches were exchanged, and Carrier gave President Minée, the renegade bishop, the kiss of peace. Then they considered "useful measures": the first of which was to organise an indiscriminate massacre of all the prisoners. The occasion was propitious, for during the day six prisoners in the great jail of Le Bouffay, found guilty of attempting to escape, had been condemned to death. They were, as the warder himself said, "Scoundrels, pillars of prison, against whom one of their accomplices, Hubert, a professional thief, had informed." [1] No political suspect had taken part in their attempt, but was it not

[1] As areward for his denunciation Hubert was moved to the Stes. Claires, released, and became the spy of Forget and the Committee (evidence of Bernard Laquèze, porter of Bouffay. *Bulletin*, vi., No. 82, pp. 326, 328. See also Bachelier's *Notes*).

a good pretext for implicating in this outbreak all the suspects in durance, useless mouths of which they should as speedily as possible rid the Republic ?

Such the plan, which was at once taken into consideration. Goullin posed as the suggester of the idea, which young Robin supported.[1] Carrier approved and declared, "We must have the heads of all those b——s off their shoulders."[2]

Some of those present remained silent—Bachelier, Naux, and Perrochaud wept,[3] but from sheer terror said nothing; for Goullin and Robin, aglow with patriotic fury, stigmatised all who did not applaud the motion as anti-revolutionaries and aristocrats. The sitting, nevertheless, ended without any conclusion being come to.

But by order of Carrier, and on the Committee's initiative, perhaps by general accord —who can tell ?—it was resumed with closed doors after supper. The debate at once grew heated. Robin and Goullin again put forward their plan to kill the lot. Heads began to

[1] Buchez and Roux, *Histoire Parlementaire*, &c., xxxiv. p. 189.

[2] Evidence of Gicqueau, Administrator of the Department one of those present at the sitting (Bachelier's *Notes*).

[3] Evidence of Gicqueau (Bachelier's *Notes*, Nantes Library, Dugast-Matifeux Collection).

wax hot; Kermen, one of the councillors of the Department, ventured to protest, and little Robin rejoined, crying, "Patriots are without bread. It is right that the scoundrels should perish and not eat the patriots' bread."

As the other bravely continued to show his indignation, Robin furiously retorted in his revolutionary jargon, "We do not want to hear proposals that smack of moderatism, feuillantism, or federalism. The prisoners are scoundrels who wished to overthrow the Republic; they must needs perish."[1] Carrier from the depths of his furs growled in chorus, "All those villains must perish."

Amid the uproar, the "frightful orgy"—as Minée, who was presiding, called it—the members of the Revolutionary Committee handed in a report announcing that the six prisoners found guilty of trying to escape were to be put to death that night.[2] Should not their execution be postponed in order that all prisoners might be included in their offence? Quickly they sent for Phélippes-Tronjolly, Chief of the Revolutionary Tribunal, and his public prosecutor, Goudet. These promptly appeared, and Minée informed them that the execution

[1] *Bulletin du Tribunal*, &c., vi., No. 83, p. 325.
[2] Evidence of Mayor Renard (Bachelier's *Notes*).

must be postponed till it was decided "whether or no the prisoners were to be put to death wholesale."[1] But Phélippes was not to be moved; no one could countermand the execution of a sentence. These culprits had been dealt with, none had escaped justice, but all the other prisoners were innocent of the crime for which the first named were about to die. He withdrew with his acolyte to hasten on the execution, which was to take place "by torchlight," and the debate began again, embittered by this unexpected resistance.

It continued throughout the night. The terrorists stood their ground, and ten times over showed the necessity for the massacre, while at each fresh argument their opponents weakened lest they should seem "not to have risen to the level of the occasion." Carrier, for that matter, was in favour of shooting them *en masse*.[2]

"We are slaying the common weal," he vowed, "by our slowness and circumspection."

Some members, who still felt compunction, proposed delay; but he appealed to the object of his mission.

"I have orders, I cannot pardon folks whom

[1] *Noyades, Fusilades ou réponse au rapport de Carrier*, by Phélippes, surnamed Tronjolly, 8vo, p. 17.

[2] Buchez and Roux, xxxiv. p. 189.

the Law condemns. I should be condemned to the guillotine." [1]

"At least," suggested one of the least timid, "consult your colleague Francastel."

The Proconsul, carried away by fury, would listen to nothing; they had to yield perforce. It was agreed that two members of each of the Bodies should be appointed as a "national jury," and draw up a list of persons in confinement at Nantes; the Revolutionary Committee would do the rest.

Goullin had gained the day. Without a pause he carried off his colleagues of the "national jury" to the Office of the Committee, while some of the others, still unconvinced, mustered courage to disappear as soon as Carrier had withdrawn. Meanwhile, Goullin and his crew set to work to draw up the fatal schedule. Taking a general list, they called out the name of each prisoner. If three members did not declare in his favour, he was written down among those "fit to be shot." There was no further discussion. As most of these poor wretches were detained for offences against Common Law and were perfectly unknown, the "jury" called in the knowledge of the spy

[1] Evidence of Gicqueau, one of those present (Bachelier's *Notes*).

Hubert to their help, the same who had already informed against his six comrades of Bouffay, executed that night for attempted escape. While this horrible work was going on, and they were plunging into it with hellish zeal, hunger overtook them at their task, and they sat round the table munching a supply of biscuits and fry which Forget had brought from his house. Bachelier who on the previous night had wept—for fear, no doubt—now showed himself one of the most determined. Goullin compelled his colleagues to sign, and Grandmaison the fencing-master threatened to report all who hesitated to Carrier.[1]

Thus in feverish fashion 500 names of prisoners were set down, of whom 155 were at Le Bouffay, 60 at L'Éperonnière, and the rest at the erstwhile convent of the Stes. Claires. When, towards five in the morning of Friday, December 5th, worn out with fatigue and fright, the members of the "national jury" withdrew, the Revolutionary Committee, with the help of Forget, Carrier's friend and spy, finished the work and drew up the following order.

[1] Evidence of Louis Naux, quoted by A. Lallié, *J. B. Carrier*, p. 107.

[2] This is the number given by Boivin; Phélippes-Tronjolly says "about 300."

"IN THE NAME OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE OF NANTES.

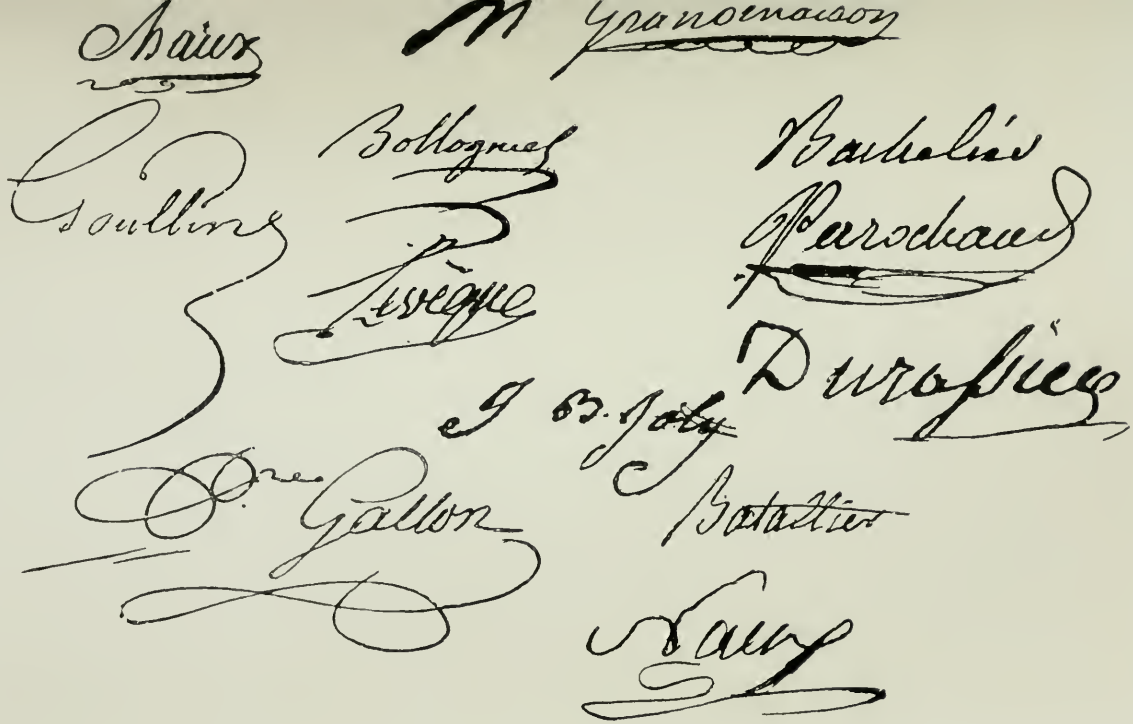
"The temporary Commandant at Nantes is hereby called upon to supply at once three hundred men, reliable troops, half of whom must proceed to the prison of Le Bouffay and seize the prisoners specified in the list appended, tie them up two and two, and proceed to the post of L'Éperonnière; the other half will march to the Stes. Claires, and escort from that house to L'Éperonnière all those mentioned in the accompanying list. When the whole shall have reached L'Éperonnière, they are further to take those confined at that place of detention and shoot them all indiscriminately, in such fashion as the Commandant may think proper.

"NANTES, Frimaire 15th, year II."[1]

Grandmaison, Goullin, and Mainguet[2] signed, and without the loss of a moment the jovial Robin—the same who at the dinner on board the galliot had sung the "Pipkin of the Mountain"—undertook to carry the order and lists

[1] *Bulletin du Tribunal*, &c., vi., No. 82, p. 328.

[2] Mainguet, Jean Baptiste, merchant pin-maker at Nantes, Rue St. Nicolas. He scarcely knew how to read, and his duty at the Committee was to store the linen, church ornaments, and articles of all sorts seized from the inhabitants. Born April 12, 1740, Mainguet died at Nantes, Rue Santeuil, August 30, 1809 (MS. *Note* by Lallié).



AUTOGRAPH SIGNATURES OF THE MEMBERS OF THE NANTES REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE.

To face page 92

to Brigadier-General Boivin, commanding the place.

He met with a rough welcome. Boivin was a Parisian of thirty-seven, formerly a journeyman chaser, a volunteer of 1792, an illiterate soldier, but a thorough-paced patriot. Awakened by Robin at six in the morning, he cast a glance at the paper which the young rascal tendered him, and remarked that the order was not legal; that, moreover, it would be daylight soon, and that it was too late to enter on such a massacre.

"So much the better," rejoined Robin; "it will strike all the more terror." [1]

Boivin kept the list, and Robin went away. As he passed in front of the portal of the cathedral he saw, in an eating-house in the square, Renard, the mayor of the city, and Mainguet seated before a *gloria*,[2] refreshing themselves after the fatigues of the night. He went in and took a seat near them.[3] All three, as they sipped their morning coffee, felt sure that butchery was in hand. But Boivin had told an aide to copy the list of the sentenced, whereupon the latter noticed that some of those who figured in it were only imprisoned "for drunkenness." He reported this

[1] Boivin's evidence (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 82, p. 327).
[2] Coffee mixed with brandy (Tr.).
[3] Lallié, *J. B. Carrier*, p. 109.

discovery to his superior, and Boivin hastened to see Goullin, who lived in the Rue Felix. The brigadier found him in bed, and told him he declined to carry out the order of the Committee. Goullin, sprawling cosily on his pillows, retorted that it *must* be obeyed, and when Boivin objected there were not enough troops, said, "Take some of the National Guards."

The officer indignantly protested that it was impossible and inexpedient to arm the people of Nantes against their fellow-citizens.

"Do you think that a father will kill his son, a brother his brother or sister, or even his friends?"

"No matter," persisted Goullin icily, "the order must be carried out." [1]

Whereupon the officer declared he would do nothing of the sort, and went out in great excitement. Quite convinced that he had signed his own death-warrant, he went to fetch his pistols, dared not stay at home for fear of being arrested there, and for more than two hours wandered about the walks, quite determined to blow out his brains "rather than be drowned or shot." He knew the people with whom he was contending.

[1] Evidence of Boivin, quoted in Lallié's *Carrier*, p. 110.

Nevertheless, he returned home somewhat calmer towards half-past ten, and there found an order to go before the Directors. He went in all haste and found himself before Minée, with his colleagues Kermen, Gicqueau, and Picot, who, having learned his refusal to obey the order of the Committee, congratulated him on his courage. Warm embraces were exchanged, and as if the valour of the Brigadier had been contagious, the officials present drew up this daring declaration :—

"We, members of the Directory of the Department of Loire-Inférieure, require, in the name of the Law, the present Commandant of the City of Nantes to defer the execution of any order he may have received from the Revolutionary Committee with regard to those now confined in the houses of detention until it has been discussed by the Administrative Bodies, which will meet without delay.

"KERMEN, MINÉE, GICQUEAU, PICOT.[1]

"Given at the Directory at Nantes."

These four men—intrepid that day, as must be confessed—thus declared war against the redoubtable Committee, against Carrier, the Marats, and all that Nantes could muster of

[1] Lallié, *Carrier*, p. 112.

rascals and fanatics. The war was fated to be of brief duration.

The constituted bodies, reinforced by Phélippes-Tronjolly, President of the Tribunal, and Goudet the Prosecutor, met indeed that very afternoon, December 5th, and the previous day's debate was resumed. Goullin and his crew renewed their proposal to put to death "a great number of prisoners, on the ground of conspiracy within the houses of detention." Phélippes reiterated that all the guilty, to the number of six, had already suffered. Chaux and Goullin, growing angry, rejoined with fury, threatening their opponents, and avouching that "the prisoners were not the only ones who were to die, for there were plenty of others." Bachelier and Grandmaison echoed their words.[1] The President of the Court and his acolyte withdrew before the business was finished, and the Committee set frantically to work. The list given to Brigadier Boivin had not been returned, one of his staff officers, Ouvrard,[2] having daringly torn it up, and a fresh one had to be prepared. Thanks to the wariness of Bachelier, they succeeded in reproducing a list of prisoners in Le Bouffay,

[1] Phélippes-Tronjolly, *Noyades*, &c., *passim*.

[2] This was the future purveyor Ouvrard, who later was celebrated for his display and his speculations.

he having a few days earlier presented himself in his character of President of the Committee at the lodge of the prison, where he examined the books and copied down in a notebook the names of the prisoners.[1]

It is very difficult to sift the incidents which marked the afternoon of the 5th from the proposals already put forward at the night sitting. As may well be imagined, the actors in those two sittings showed themselves chary in admissions; their reticence and the hesitation of their pronouncements, purposely confused, make it difficult to note with exactness the various phases of the discussion. However, it is enough to know that for twenty-four hours, and perhaps more, the Revolutionary Committee, represented by Goullin, Chaux, Bachelier, Mainguet, and Grandmaison, persisted in demanding the massacre of untried prisoners. Robin and Forget of the People's Society applauded this patriotic measure; Renard, the Mayor, showed no hostility, while Minée and his colleagues of

[1] Evidence of Julien Barbier, sometime attorney at Blain. "About the first days of last Frimaire I saw, early in the morning in the prison hall, the man Bachelier, then Chief of the Revolutionary Tribunal, engaged in reading the list of the prisoners and taking from it several names, which he wrote down in a notebook which he took away with him" (*Archives Départmentales*, &c., Political Events, No. 123 *bis*. Communicated by Lallié).

the Departmental Council openly revolted at it, but were afraid, and their energy had exhausted itself in the issue of the order for respite quoted above. As for Carrier, his opinion was predetermined.

He supped that evening at the Quai Bouguer with Tronjolly and citizeness Jeanne Lavigne, at whose house the President of the Tribunal lived.[1] Five only sat down.[2] It may appear astonishing that Carrier should consent to sit at the table of a man who from the night before had energetically opposed the massacre; but he bore no malice, and the meal seems to have passed off unrestrainedly enough, judging by the fact that when Phélippes, in a friendly way, made some remarks to his guest on "the hastiness" intended as to the prisoners, Carrier rejoined:

"You are a set of b——s of judges, a lot of blasted s——s, who want proofs and witnesses before you can execute a man. Shy them in the water for me, it's much quicker."[3]

And no doubt by way of a polite speech to

[1] "Carrier came to supper Frimaire 15th" (December 5th) (evidence of Phélippes, *Bulletin*, vi., No. 60, p. 236). The quay is now the Quai Brancas.

[2] Beside Phélippes, Carrier, and Dame Lavigne, there supped "a proctor of the Commune and a late public prosecutor" (*idem*).

[3] Evidence of Citizeness Lavigne, *Bulletin*, vi., No. 76, p. 302.

the mistress of the house he added: "Are so many proofs necessary? Go on, you'll see me make *sans-culottes* of the women." [1]

It was a revelation to Phélippes. As soon as his guests were gone he told his hostess that he would spend the night out. When she asked him the reason of this late outing, he rejoined: "I will tell you to-morrow." [2]

Carrier, meanwhile, had not gone home. He passed through the town and betook himself to the Revolutionary Committee, which he knew was sitting permanently. The thorough-goers were there sure enough, still working at the lists of death—Bachelier, Goullin, and Louis Naux. The Representative passed with them into the registry, where they conversed.[3] A little after midnight Richard, adjutant of the Marat Company, who happened to be there, was instructed to carry an order to Pierre Affilé, shipwright, who lived at Chézine, at the extreme end of the Quai de la Fosse. Richard set off at once, found Affilé at the guard-house of the Sécherie, and explained to him "that he was

[1] Evidence of Phélippes, *Bulletin*, vi., No. 60, p. 236. (Literally: "Unbreech the women."—Tr.)

[2] Evidence of Citizeness Lavigne, *Bulletin*, vi., No. 76, p. 302.

[3] "Carrier came to the Committee. He withdrew to the registry, and it was decided that they should give orders to Affilé" (evidence of Bachelier, President, quoted by Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 17).

wanted for a secret expedition, a *baignade*"—a bathing-party in the Loire in December! Affilé understood and showed no astonishment; for that matter the order sent him was explicit.

"In the name of the French Republic. The Revolutionary Committee hereby authorises Citizen Affilé, junior, shipwright, residing at Chézine, to requisition such a number of carpenters as he may think necessary to carry out the mission entrusted to him. The said citizen is called upon to exercise the utmost speed, and to pay freely the workmen he employs, provided that they carry out their work with the zeal and activity it deserves.

"NANTES, Frimaire 16th, year II. of the Republic.

"BACHELIER, President, RICHELOT, GOULLIN, PROUT senior, LOUIS NAUX, GUILLET."[1]

Affilé lost not a moment. He brought a lighter and two small barges to the quayside. With his men he worked all night at getting them ready, at "nailing the planks." But day broke and no one came. Was the expedition countermanded?

It was delayed at any rate, thanks to Phélippes. On leaving Citizeness Lavigne the evening before, he had gone to Le Bouffay, and

[1] The document, of which the original was produced at the time of the trial of the members of the Revolutionary Tribunal of Nantes, is, says Lallié, from the hand of Goullin (*Noyades*, p. 18).

FRONT AND MAIN STAIRCASE OF LE BOUFFAY FROM THE PLACE WHERE THE SCAFFOLD STOOD.

To face Page 101.

found the place in confusion. The prison had been broken open by the men of the Marat Company, and since eight that evening they had been carrying things with a high hand and making a tremendous noise. The prisoners, under lock and key, were from moment to moment tremblingly awaiting massacre. Phélippes and the prosecutor Goudet established themselves in the registry, which they never left all night, contending against the madmen, who demanded, "at any rate the most guilty, to make an end of them."[1] Not until the dawn, when the Marats departed, worn out with yelling and drink, did Phélippes quit the prison and go home.[2] His reputation for lukewarm-

[1] Evidence of Barbier, attorney at Blain (*Archives de la Loire-Inférieure*, Political Occurrences, No. 123 *bis*. Communicated by M. Lallié).

[2] It was of a certainty during the night of Frimaire 15th (December 5th) that Phélippes showed this firm front. (He says so himself in his pamphlet, *Noyades, Fusillades*, &c., p. 18, of the October edition.) It was also certainly that same evening that he supped with Carrier at Dame Lavigne's. She, in her evidence before the Tribunal, avers that the supper took place *a few days after* the night that Phélippes spent at Le Bouffay (*Bulletin*, vi. No. 76, p. 302). But Phélippes himself, whose recollections, as may be imagined, are more exact, says expressly: "Carrier came to supper on Frimaire 15th" (December 5th) (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 60, p. 237). This detail is of importance, for it would be hard to conceive Phélippes inviting Carrier to supper when the cynical cruelty of the Proconsul was already known to him and war declared between them.

ness and antagonism to Carrier dated from that night. They were destined to meet again long afterwards, when revengeful disclosures were the order of the day, as will be seen in the sequel of this terrible history.

CHAPTER V

AN INCIDENT NO LONGER OF A NOVEL KIND

In reality this failure to strike was a check to Carrier and to the Committee, his accomplices. Phélippes, however, was afraid lest the advantage gained over the massacrers should be only transitory. He reminded all officials of an ordinance already of long standing,[1] forbidding "the removal from houses of restraint or detention of any person detained, no matter at whose order, except after discharge by the Registrar, given in virtue of a decree of the Convention on a legal decision." He hoped in this way to save the captives from a butchery by surprise similar to those which had ensanguined Paris in September 1792. But his opponents were men of resource.

Exactly on that very day, Friday, December 6th, fifty-three priests brought from Angers reached Nantes.[2] They were taken, not to Le

[1] It had been promulgated on July 4th of that same year, 1793 (*Noyades*, &c., p. 9).

[2] The number varies with the witnesses. Trappe and Moreau say fifty-five (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 79, p. 315), the widow

Bouffay, but to the Entrepôt, a huge building standing at the west of the city, not far from the harbour, and intended as a storehouse for coffee coming from the colonies.[1] For the last two months it had been turned into a house of detention. There was room in it for ten thousand prisoners, but as yet this tremendous building was almost vacant at the beginning of December, and the fifty-three Angevine priests were the first to be lodged there. It was not, properly speaking, a prison; Dumais, the governor, had neither a register of admissions, nor warders. So many admitted, so many discharged, but no record by name. No other account was set down, and it may be imagined that this total absence of control made Phélippes' circular totally nugatory. How, to be sure, could it apply to nameless prisoners? Thus it came about that the former bonding-house for coffee became the great reservoir whence Carrier and the Committee were constantly to draw uncounted victims in nameless bands.

Dumais fifty-six (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 67, p. 268); Affilé and Robert the boatman fifty-seven (*Bulletin*, vi., pp. 316–317, and *Commission des Vingt-un*, p. 301); Richard puts it at fifty (Buchez and Roux, xxxiv. p. 164).

[1] The Entrepôt, which was private property, belonged to Messrs. Grucy and Dupare. It held, at the time when it was turned into a prison, coffee valued at four millions, which had to be removed in haste (Lallié, *Les Prisons de Nantes pendant la Revolution*, p. 53).

So, then, the priests from Angers were confined there. Directly they arrived the rumour spread among those desirous of information that these black gentry were amply provided with money and articles of value. The Committee, scenting a good stroke of business, promptly sent one of its agents, Trappe the locksmith, to Carrier to take the orders of the Representative: "were they to leave the prisoners a vast quantity of jewels of which they were possessed?" [1]

Trappe did not find Carrier at his mansion in Little Holland, but as he was on his way back to the Committee, "to give an account of his mission" which had failed, he met the Proconsul and put the question to him.

"Take away the lot," was the reply. "Put all those b——s on board, and don't let me hear any more of them." [2]

This plain speech was an encouraging hint, which stimulated their aspiring ambition. The adjutant of the Marat Company, whose name we have already mentioned, Jean Claude Richard, hatter of Nantes, saw clearly the chances of gain; but a man must hurry who wanted to turn the occasion to account and not let himself be anticipated by cronies better situated, such as Lamberty, Fouquet, and

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 79, p. 315. [2] *Ibid.*

others, who had taken all the benefits of the first expedition to themselves. Richard therefore set his wits to work to prevent this business, which looked lucrative, from getting wind. He went in search of Carrier, found him by eight in the evening, and insinuatingly hinted that the priests confined at the Entrepôt bade fair to cost the Republic a good deal of money for food. What, then, was to be done ?

Carrier once again settled the matter. "They must not be kept in that house. Not so much mystery. All the b——s must be fired into the water." [1]

In so saying Carrier knew that he would be obeyed, for that very day he wrote to his fellows of the Committee of Public Safety : "The public temper at Nantes has for three weeks past been fully worthy of the Revolution. The priests found their grave in the Loire : *fifty-three others are about to undergo the same fate.*" [2]

It was to his friend Lamberty that he gave the guidance of the expedition ; [3] but while he

[1] Buchez and Roux, xxxiv. p. 164.

[2] Lallié, *J. B. Carrier*, p. 121.

[3] He handed him his "warrant," couched in the following terms : "Nantes, Frimaire 16th, year II. Carrier, Representative of the People with the army of the West, requests and bids such number of citizens as Guillaume Lamberty may choose, to obey all orders he may give them concerning an expedition which we have intrusted to him. He enjoins on

prepared but slackly, Richard displayed a remarkable activity. Early on the morning of the 7th he hastened to Chézine, to Affilé's the shipwright, who had been warned twenty-four hours before. Affilé must come to town at once; they were asking for him at the Committee. They went together, and found Grandmaison, Goullin, Bachelier, and Colas, port-lieutenant, already there. Affilé was bidden to wait, Carrier would not be long. In fact, the Representative arrived erelong, and took Colas, Goullin, and the shipwright into the adjoining room.[1] They discussed plans for the preparation of the lighter: for that used in the first "noyade" did not, as will be remembered, give complete satisfaction, and some of those on board managed to escape. This time they would do better. Two movable panels

the commanders of posts at Nantes to allow free passage, whether by night or day, to the said Lamberty and the citizens that he may have with him (*sic*). Forbids any one whatever to impose the smallest hindrance on any measures their expedition may require. The Representative of the French People, CARRIER. He shall be allowed to pass and enter freely with all such men as he may have under his orders."

"In virtue of the order of the Representative of the People above quoted, the commanders of posts, of the town, of the barriers, and others, shall moreover act towards them in accordance with this order. Signed, for the commandant of the town, Duboul, Deputy Mayor" (*Archives du greffe de Nantes*. Document quoted by Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 19).

[1] Bachelier's *Notes*. Affilé was not sure that Bachelier was present at this secret confabulation.

must be fitted at the bottom of the vessel,[1] which on being opened would form leaks, so that the lighter, flooded from below, would assuredly sink headlong.

But Affilé and Colas would not agree to take the matter in hand without a formal and written order. That was very right. Carrier pushed open the door of the office and bade them draw out a demand for Affilé's services.[2] The paper was at once made out, and signed by Grandmaison, Louis Naux, Bollogniel, and Goullin.[3] There was nothing more needed than to "proceed."

Affilé went back to Chézine, and at once took the work in hand. He had enough to occupy him for two days, and Adjutant Richard made good use of the time.[4] Escorted by his friend Lebrun the dyer, a private in the Marat Company, he went as far as the Entrepôt to ascer-

[1] Evidence of Pierre Robert, boatman (*Pièces remises, &c.*, p. 101).

[2] Bachelier's *Notes*. Second deposition of Affilé.

[3] "The Revolutionary Committee authorises Citizen Colas to take as many barges and other craft as he may think advisable for the task with which he is entrusted by the Committee. Nantes, Frimaire 17th, year II. of the Republic. Signed: Grandmaison, Louis Naux, and others."

"Citizen Affilé is enjoined to see to the execution of the order given to Citizen Colas, and requires all bargemen to obey the requisition of the said Affilé under pain of being declared bad citizens. Signed: Louis Naux, Bollogniel, Goullin, and others."

[4] *Courrier Républicain*, Brumaire 13th, year III., p. 31.

tain whether the temper of the people there would allow of the priests passing one by one into an office, where he could take their names. Dumais, the manager, artlessly assured him that nothing was easier, and at eleven in the evening of the 8th he had another visit from Richard and Lebrun,[1] attended by a sergeant and four privates, whom they had just "requisitioned" in the name of the Revolutionary Committee as they passed the post at Launay.[2] Richard bade the men bring the fifty-three "black gentry," one by one, to him in a closet, where he ensconced himself with his crony. The process then immediately began. Richard relieved each prisoner of his watch, his money, his pocket-book, indeed of all that these unfortunates still retained of any value. He searched them himself in order to make more sure, and handed the confiscated objects to Lebrun, who heaped them up in a corner. Even while passing his hand under their clothes he questioned them *pro formâ*, as to their names and conditions, but took no pains to set these useless data down in writing.[3] The seizure being finished—without any official record—he begged Mme. Dumais, the manager's

[1] Evidence of Moreau (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 79, p. 315).
[2] *Idem, ibidem.*
[3] Bachelier's *Notes*. *Idem.*

wife, to oblige him with a pillow-case, into which he stuffed watches, rings, buckles, and jewels, hoisted the whole on his back, and went off well content.[1]

One only of the priests managed to conceal forty-four louis in gold, a ring, and a silver seal. These he handed to Dame Dumais, requesting her to employ what they fetched in having masses said for him and his fellow-victims. She prudently declined, and lodged the whole with the Committee.[2]

[1] Moreau avers that Richard carried off the bag (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 79, p. 315). Richard declared that he did nothing of the kind. "To draw up an official statement," he says, "would have taken too much time. But although that formality was not observed, I beg the Court to believe that nothing was abstracted. I first asked widow Dumais" (Dumais died during the trial) "for a pillow-case in which to stow the most valuable of the articles. Afterwards I asked for a sack, in which the whole was placed. The sack was then sealed, and the deposit taken to the bonding-house." Was it only the sack, containing things of little value, that remained at the bonding-house? That appears certain; for when brought before the Committee, Richard at last owned that he was driven out of the Marat Company because he had made folks jealous of him there by despoiling the priests and *provisionally* taking home the duds and jewels found upon them (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 72, p. 185). For that matter Affilé testified (*Bulletin*, No. 80, p. 317 *et seq.*) "that he had seen in a wardrobe of Richard's a quantity of watches and other jewellery. I made," he adds, "a remark on it to the woman Richard, who answered that her husband had brought home plenty of others."

[2] Evidence of Thérèse Anastase Lacroix, wife of Dumais, sometime manager of the bonding-house (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 67, p. 268).

To make an end of this occurrence, let us record that Lamberty was not pleased. Richard, the adjutant, had emphatically "stolen a march on him." An extremely lively altercation ensued, which soon degenerated into a fight.[1] Lamberty made an effort to secure a share of the booty. He hurried to the bonding-house, and drawing his sabre put the point of it to Dame Dumais' neck, crying, "Wench! thou shalt answer to me for the plunder of these priests!"[2]

Then, realising that he had been tricked, he dragged Richard to Carrier's, who sympathised deeply with his trouble.

"Damnation!" cried the Deputy, "I kept this job for Lamberty. I am vexed that it should have been carried out by others."

And as his friend declared he would not again put his paw into the fire, the Proconsul, to quiet him, offered a glimpse of a coming speculation of the same kind, but more lucrative.[3]

It only remained now to make away with the fifty-three priests, a mere formality carried out on December 9th. That day, towards eleven in the morning, Affilé completed his preparations.

[1] Evidence of Jacques Gauthier (*Bulletin*, No. 94, p. 374).
[2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 79, p. 315.
[3] Evidence of Trappe (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 79, p. 315).

With the help of the boatman Pierre Robert he brought his lighter alongside the Chaurrand slip.[1] The workmen laid planks along the bottom to disguise the apertures, and night having fallen, towards ten o'clock the seamen who had charge of the lighter saw Affilé and his men draw near, bringing the victims "tied together two and two." They were stowed on board the vessel, which was shut down and poled out into the stream. Affilé with nine boatmen and the ruffians Fouquet, O'Sullivan, and Foucaud, together with Gauthier of the Marat Company, followed in two barges to direct the evolution. In the dim night the two small craft passed silently down-stream escorting the large lighter.

It was a long voyage, for they dropped down as far as Indret, two leagues from Nantes. There at last the valves of the lighter were opened; she grew heavy, sank, and without a cry being heard, vanished.[2]

"*An incident which is no longer of a novel nature,*" wrote Carrier to the Convention next day, and following up his witticism, added

[1] Evidence of Pierre Robert (*Pièces remises*, &c., Paris, National Press, Brumaire, year III., p. 101).

[2] Testimony of Pierre Robert, Pierre Foucaud, cooper, temporary commandant of Paimbœuf, and of the shipwright Affilé, &c. (*Pièces remises*, &c., *passim*).

with regard to the priests from Angers, "Being confined in a boat on the Loire, they were last night swallowed up by the river. What a revolutionary torrent that Loire is!"[1] As three days earlier he had expressly prophesied this "shipwreck," the Committee of Public Safety would need an improbable dose of simplicity or carelessness to set down this second "noyade" to an accident. Anyhow, no one at Paris was deceived, and the letter, when read in the Assembly, was hailed with "undying plaudits."[2] Carrier, finding his work officially approved and upheld, felt himself in a position to continue his task.

[1] *Moniteur*, reprint, xviii. 670.
[2] Mercier, *Le nouveau Paris*.

CHAPTER VI

THE NIGHT OF FRIMAIRE 24TH (DECEMBER 14, 1793)

THIS second drowning of priests was in the eyes of the Proconsul a mere interlude. He was furious at the breakdown of the plan of wholesale massacre which he had at least prompted and upheld, if not formulated. It was a blow dealt at his omnipotence, and he could not bring himself to put up with this defeat. His intentions on this point were clear, and in his letter to the Committee of Safety, dated Frimaire 16th, he had said, "The anti-revolutionaries remaining in the jails of Nantes have devised the most horrible plot. By means of false keys, with which they proved to be provided, they were to open the doors of all the prisons, butcher the porters and warders, and set fire to the jails and a portion of Nantes. Six of the most guilty have been guillotined on the spot: *a drastic measure will shortly rid us of the others.*" [1]

There was no truth whatever in this "hor-

[1] Aulard, *Recueil des Actes du Comité*, ix. 222.

rible plot," and we know already to what it amounted. Six old offenders detained in the Le Bouffay prison had conspired to copy in block-tin the keys that opened the doors of the jail. One of their fellows rounded on them, and they were sentenced to death and executed. Even by the showing of the porter none of the other prisoners were implicated in this outburst, which, moreover, had not caused any upset. Hence it was to justify this premeditated butchery that Carrier accused these poor wretches of planning the devastation of the city.

His mind was made up, but he was not the man, as we have seen, to make out an exact order. On December 13th he came to the Committee,[1] scolding and cursing, upbraiding the members present with "only taking half measures and being reactionaries, in league with the brigands."[2] He also manifested great displeasure at the delay shown in carrying out his orders.[3] Grandmaison, the fencing-master and drowner, took upon himself to answer: was Carrier prepared to give "written warrants for the execution of the measures he was imposing on the Committee?" To which the

[1] Bollogniel's evidence (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 79, p. 315).
[2] Buchez and Roux, xxxiv. p. 163.
[3] Grandmaison's evidence (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 58, p. 230).

Representative, with one of his usual outbursts, rejoined, "Am I not the Representative of the People? Do you think I shall not justify my work?"[1]

In this way, as Bollogniel owns, "all the members of the Committee" were warned as early as December 13th what was going to happen,[2] and the next day was taken up with cautious preparations.

On Saturday 14th (Frimaire 24th) when night had fallen, about six o'clock, Fleury, the Captain of the Marats,[3] mustered his men in the Rue du Peuple Français, at the Cottin House, which was their headquarters. The building still exists in the Rue Royale, known by its columned porch.[4] These Marats, thirty in number, were led by him to the Committee Building close at hand, where Goullin, Bachelier, Grandmaison, and others met them.[5] As soon as they had filed in the doors were shut, and without any preamble they were told how things stood: plague was raging in the jails, and

[1] Buchez and Roux, xxxiv. p. 163.

[2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 79, p. 315.

[3] "Whose calling is nowhere set forth" (Lallié, *La Compagnie Marat*).

[4] The garden of the mansion had an exit on the Rue Tournefort. Data supplied by P. de Lisle, Keeper of the Dobrée Museum.

[5] Evidence of René Bernard Séguinel, one of the Marat Company (Bachelier's *Notes*).

its bad results must be arrested. Accordingly, they would proceed that evening to Le Bouffay in bodies of five or six, in order to take over the prisoners, whom they would march up to the front of the Salorges[1] at the far end of the quay of La Fosse, whence they would be shipped for the island of Belle Isle.[2] The pretext was admirable, but the remainder of the narrative will demonstrate that the Marats could not for a moment have been deceived as to the nature of this prophylactic transfer. One of them, Séguinel, a cabinet-maker and poor man who could not read, avers that he at once became "uneasy." Goullin, be it said, as though wishful to preclude all possible illusion, inquired aloud, "Who knows where Lamberty is lodged?" Gauthier[3] announced that he had just seen him in a wine-shop on the Place St. Pierre, and Goullin bade him go and fetch the great "drowner."

But Lamberty was still sulking. He gave Gauthier to understand that he had "no business at the Committee." Goullin sent the

[1] The bonding-house for salts, built by La Ferme, was so-called (*Annales Nantaises*, by Michel Guimar, year III., p. 648).

[2] *Courrier*, Brumaire 23rd, year III., p. 111, and Brumaire 28th, p. 148. Depositions of Gauthier and Séguinel, both of the Marat Company.

[3] Late cutler, and one of the Marat Company.

soldier a second time, telling him to insist; Lamberty would listen to nothing, alleging that "he had no orders from Carrier." Gauthier came back to the Committee, and in view of the failure of his attempt Goullin and Grandmaison made up their minds to go with him and persuade Lamberty. The three found him in the Place.

"I have orders from Carrier," said Goullin, "and it is to you that such takings-off are usually given in charge."[1] The drowner fell into a rage, an altercation ensued, and to put an end to the dispute Goullin and Grandmaison proceeded with Lamberty to Carrier's.

In the streets they met Séguinel, whose "uneasiness" was redoubled. Knowing that Lamberty was not in the business, he was on his way back from Le Bouffay, where he had not refrained from telling his comrades that he feared they might be led to "take a false step." In order to reassure him, Goullin, Lamberty, and Grandmaison took him with them to Carrier's. It was then, presumably, about nine in the evening.

The four men ascended together the gloomy staircase leading to the Conventional's lodging. They found him in an outer room, and on

[1] Gauthier's evidence, *Courrier, loc. cit.*

catching sight of Séguinel, whom he did not know, he growled suspiciously, "Who is that man?"

They explained that he was a Marat, and the Proconsul was reassured.

"So you have not told Lamberty what it was all about?" inquired Goullin.

By way of answer the Proconsul took his friends into an adjoining room and shut the door, leaving Séguinel by himself. After a pretty long interval Carrier and the others reappeared, bidding him go back to Le Bouffay and induce his comrades to "proceed."[1] Carrier kept Lamberty to supper, and perhaps the other two, for the three were not seen again at Le Bouffay until pretty late at night. Even then Lamberty looked in only as a mere spectator; on the way he met one of the Marats.

"You are on a raid?" he asked.

The other replied in the affirmative, astonished at seeing Lamberty take an interest in such a matter.

"Ay," observed the drowner, "it is Goullin who has the order this time, but they are keeping a finer job still for me. There are priests at Mt. St. Michel, and if Carrier goes to Rennes, it is I who will pack them off."

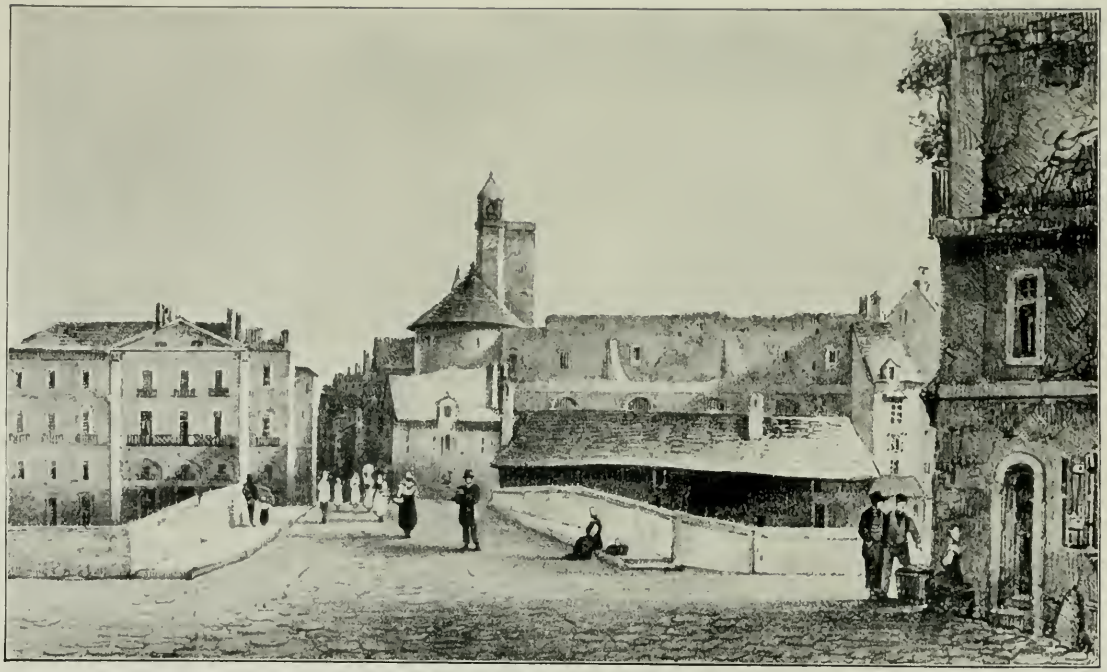
[1] Evidence of René Bernard Séguinel, of the Marat Company (*Courrier, loc. cit.*, and Bachelier's *Notes*).

And he calmly went off to bed.[1]

Le Bouffay was an old and sordid building—black, furrowed, and frowning—the older parts of it dating from the tenth century. For four hundred years it had served as law-court and prison. In the seventeenth century the front looking on the Place had been rebuilt in a fairly regular style. A heavy and lofty staircase in stone led on that side to the halls where the revolutionary tribunals sat. The rest of the block, a jumble of towers, narrow courts, and erections, huddled together at the mercy of successive renovations, was hemmed in on three sides by wretched dog-holes, quaking and unstable. From this irregular congeries of roofs and tottering walls projected a belfry surmounted by a dome of lead upheld by caryatides and sheltering a peal of bells.[2] The door of the registry once passed you found an irregular courtyard, damp and dark, encumbered with an old chapel and surrounded by the quarters intended for the prisoners—pestilent rat-holes or plague-stricken garrets, known

[1] Deposition of Jacques Gauthier, Marat, in *Courrier*, Brumaire 28th, year III., p. 148, and Bachelier's *Notes*. It is well to add that all these reports, both here and wherever they are found throughout this work, are reproduced *verbally* from the references given.

[2] The crown-work of this belfry is still extant on the top of the tower of Ste. Croix Church, where it was placed on the demolition of Le Bouffay.



LE BOUFFAY, SEEN FROM THE QUAY ON THE LOIRE.

From an old Print.

To face Page 120

as the "great" and the "little civil," the "higher dungeon," the "Tower," the "Tower room," and so forth.[1]

As for the Place du Bouffay, it did not open, as is now the case, on the quayside. It formed a sort of courtyard, closed on this front by a long barrack running beside the water, and which in the Revolution days was tenanted by a guard;[2] the Mint barred access to Port Maillard on the east.[3] In the centre of the square rose the guillotine, painted red.

The Marats sent by the Committee had come on the scene towards nine in the evening in small groups, as they had been advised to do. Bernard Laquèze, the porter of the prison, first saw two strangers arrive carrying ropes. One of them tapped him on the shoulder, and drawing him aside announced that "the Law would relieve him that night of 150 prisoners." The porter inquired where they were going to be taken.

"To a vessel," replied the man laconically, "to work at a fort which is urgently wanted."[4]

Others soon turned up, till by ten in the

[1] A hand-drawn plan of Le Bouffay, dated the year VI., is preserved in the archives of the Mairie at Nantes.

[2] It was demolished in 1822.

[3] The "Mint" was pulled down in 1820.

[4] *Registre des Déclarations;* Municipal Archives of Nantes, quoted by Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 26.

evening they numbered some thirty, armed with sabres, pistols, and guns. One of them had even provided himself with an axe.[1]

They demanded the prisoners, but Bernard Laquèze regretted that he could not hand them over without a written order. Some of the Marats, alleging urgency, a few minutes later put into his hands a paper signed by Goullin, Guillet, Lévêque, Chevalier, and Louis Naux, bidding him in the name of the Revolutionary Committee to hand over to the men of the Marat Company the 155 prisoners named in a list which was at the same time handed to the porter. The latter glanced it through and noticed that several of the people enumerated were no longer at Le Bouffay. Some were dead, others released, others again had been taken as sick to the hospital. No matter, the list must be called over.

But first of all they rollicked and laughed.

[1] Deposition of François Ollivier, detained at Le Bouffay (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 87, p. 348). See also *infra* the evidence of Julien Leroi. The Marats mentioned in the various depositions as having taken an active part in the crime of Frimaire 24th are: Jean Boussy, Desmarets, Bercard, Lafargue, Julien Petit, Séguinel, Gauthier, Pinatel, René Naux (brother of Louis, member of the Committee), Viot (or Viaux), Boulays, Lebrun, Dubreuil, Sauvage, Jolly, Vic, Durassier (all three delegates of the Revolutionary Committee), Chartier, Ducou, Richard, Coron, Coussin, Bouvier, Crépin, and so forth.

The Marats called for drink and revelled; then unrolling their ropes they played at binding each other to see who was deftest. Jolly, a vigorous man with long black moustaches, was declared victor in this grim tourney.[1] They cracked jokes with the ladies. Tapping the shoulder of the porter's cook, Jeanne Laillet, who was sobbing with fright, Crespin said: "Ah, cursed wench! Your turn will come soon." [2]

Citizeness Laquèze, who was ill and in bed, called this girl to her and scolded her. "Don't be seen crying again; give them all they want." [3]

The two turnkeys, Joson Girardeau [4] and Gervais Poupon,[5] received orders to open the cells. Poupon opened without alacrity, but Joson seemed delighted; he himself belonged to the Marat Company.[6] He took the keys and piloted his comrades through the mazes of the prison. "Come and see my birds in their cages," he cried.[7]

He opened the doors of the cells, bawling,

[1] Testimony of Bd. Laquèze. The *Bulletin* (vi., No. 68, p. 271) speaks of him as *Lacaille*.

[2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 84, p. 336.

[3] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 71, p. 282.

[4] Joson or Joseph Girardeau was the brother of Citizeness Laquèze (*Archives Nationales*, F. 7, 4422).

[5] Or *Hervé* Poupon (Bachelier's *Notes*).

[6] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 62, p. 256.

[7] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 71, p. 282.

"Up with you all. Pack up your traps, no exceptions!" [1]

And he ran about the corridors, exhorting, "Come now, my children, keep only your pocket-books, they are important. Leave your things there, they will be carried on board ship for you." [2]

Ducou, a Marat, wigmaker by trade, thought the joke an excellent one.

"Aren't they finely bamboozled!" [3] he cried.

The prisoners rose in confusion. What was wanted of them? Why this turmoil? One of them, leaving his cell, asked a soldier on duty "Where they were going to be taken?" The sentinel replied that it was a question of transferring them to the houses of *émigrés*, in order to cleanse Le Bouffay of bad air and give the prisoners better conveniences.[4]

Then the roll-call began. Durassier, a "Marat," perfectly drunk, held the list, which he hiccoughed, distorting the names: "Titelen, . . . Peintelin . . . Teintelin." [5]

[1] Evidence of Tintelin (*Teinglein* the *Bulletin* calls him), then a prisoner at Le Bouffay (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 64, p. 256).

[2] Bachelier's *Notes*. Evidence of Hervé Poupon.

[3] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 71, p. 282.

[4] Evidence of Tintelin, *loc. cit.*

[5] *Idem*. This Tintelin, who had charge of the military catering and was denounced to the Committee, which put him in durance at Le Bouffay, did not answer when his name

His comrade Lebrun lighted him with a candle. He too was so full of liquor that he stumbled "over a corpse"—no doubt that of a prisoner who had died during the day and whose body had not yet been removed—and had great difficulty in regaining his balance.[1] As the prisoners came out they were pounced on by Jolly, the giant with the big moustaches, who dragged them into the kitchen and tied them up in pairs, sweating profusely as he did so. Ducou and others helped him in the job.[2] The prisoners, dumbfounded, let them have their way, but few attempting to resist; these were expelled from the cells with blows of the butt, their hair torn, and themselves dragged, jostled, and mishandled.[3]

Durassier, whenever his call did not take effect, roared angrily: "Come along, you cursed beggars! Get out, aren't you very glad we're giving you a change of air?"[4]

The work, however, made scanty progress, for the "Marats" were drinking bumpers at

was called, more than a hundred times, and thus escaped the drowning.

[1] *Courrier* of Brumaire 15th, year III., and *Bulletin*, vi., No. 81, p. 324.

[2] Evidence of Laquèze (? Lacaille) (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 68, p. 271).

[3] Bachelier's *Notes*. Evidence of Hervé Poupon.

[4] Evidence of François Ollivier, market-gardener, imprisoned at Le Bouffay (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 87, p. 348).

the gatekeeper's lodge. Almost all were drunk towards midnight,[1] and the prisoners, to say truth, grew mightily distrustful and showed little eagerness to obey. There was no longer any room to cherish illusions; for a youth of fifteen, while they were tying him up, cried out for his belongings left behind in the cell, and was answered "that he would have no need of them where he was going."[2] Durassier hustled another who was ill and leaning on a stick. "You don't want any stick. Get on, b——! We'll soon give you a good stick!"

One man struggled and refused to move on. The gunner who had unearthed him gave him over to the same Durassier. "Here's a b—— that wants looking after."

The Marats dragged the man off with a pistol to his breast, threatening to fire at the slightest movement of revolt. A little later an explosion rang out, which in the echoing night "resounded like a volley," and it was known that on the great staircase of Le Bouffay a refractory prisoner had been killed by a pistol shot.[3]

A "cocassier," as they call egg and poultry

[1] Tintelin's evidence. The drinking, according to Grandmaison, took place at eleven, "but there was no grand meal, as people have made out" (*Bulletin*, vi. No. 58, p. 230).

[2] Tintelin's evidence. [3] *Ibid.*

dealers in the Nantes country, who had been detained for a supposed theft of which he was later shown to be innocent, was seized on with the others. This fellow, of whom we shall hear again, was called Julien Leroi. Somewhat outspokenly he told Grandmaison and Ducou as they were tying him up, "If I die, it will at any rate be as a good Republican."

To which the former rejoined, "Blasted b——! It's not your death but your property we want." [1]

After the appearance of Grandmaison, drunk as any private "Marat," [2] and Goullin, who, being detained, as we have seen, by Carrier, only came on the scene late at night, the work was pushed on more rapidly, difficult as that was.

"Time to get their clothes on, time to rummage them, and time to knock [3] them on the head, it's quite a lot," groaned Ducou.

For while he tied up the victims he did not forget to pay his attentions to their pocket-books.[4] The others did no less. Thus while Jolly was binding the hands of a poor "tra-

[1] *Journal des lois* of Ventôse 29th, year III.

[2] On his own confession, *vide Bulletin*, vi., No. 84, p. 335.

[3] In the text it is "shoot" (*fusiller*), but that is quite certainly a gloss.

[4] Evidence of the girl Laillet (*Bulletin*, vi. No. 71, p. 282).

veller" of Nantes, named Alexis Garnier, the latter found himself robbed of sixty-four livres that he had on him.[1] Jolly—the fact is significant for the sequel of the story—in order to tie the cords more securely, leaned on the knots with all the power of his knee. Garnier begged him not to pull so tight, to which the other rejoined that "it was not for long."[2] When the victims had been thus trussed in couples, nine or ten pairs were fastened together by a long cable, thus making "chains" of eighteen or twenty.

Grandmaison had taken charge of the work. "It's time, let us be off," he kept repeating every moment.[3] He went from room to room, summoning the prisoners and dealing heavy blows at the recalcitrant with the flat of his sword. "Cursed beggars! Hurry up there! Will your toilet soon be made?"

Goullin, for his part, pushed his search even to the infirmary and beat up the sick. There was a dying man there, Charles Anna by name, a policeman from Paris. One of the "Marats," seeing his eyes closed, lifted their lids.[4]

[1] Forty livres only, according to Bachelier's *Notes*.

[2] Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 31.

[3] Depositions of Gervais (or Hervé) Poupon (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 87, p. 348).

[4] Evidence of Laquèze, the porter (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 68, p. 271).

"Lord!" said he to the comrade with him, "he is going to die; he cannot walk any more. What would you do with that one? To-morrow he will be dead; look how he rolls his eyes!" To which the other rejoined, "It's no matter, there are carriages; he must be taken away." [1]

It would be necessary to quote a hundred such cases to complete the picture. First, there was a poor wretch named Poignan, who had escaped from the kitchen where Jolly and Ducou were pinioning their victims, and ran into the courtyard, calling to his fellow-captives still in their cells, "We are lost, my friends; they are going to drown us!"

Another, already pinioned and racked by thirst, begged the porter for pity's sake to give him a glass of water.

"He does not need it," said one of the gang to Laquèze, "in a moment or two he will be drinking from the big cup."

Again, one of the Marats, having corded a big and stalwart fellow, Jean Durand, proudly showed him to his mates, observing, "This one will drink a lot, he is a strong man." [2]

Finally, Goullin, urging on the work and

[1] Tintelin's evidence (*Arch. Muns.*, &c., quoted by Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 29).

[2] Evidence of Alexis Garnier, *idem*, p. 32.

passing from group to group, exhorted his men to make haste.

"Quick, quick, my friends! the tide is ebbing." [1]

Those who were already pinioned wept and lamented. A grenadier, sentenced to fifteen days for stealing a pair of trousers, was sobbing and asking, "If it was possible they should put him to death for such a trifling crime?" [2]

The "Marats," hounded on by Goullin, did not answer. Seeing the night was far spent, he was for making a speedy end, but had not got his full tally; his drunkards had scarcely tied up a hundred prisoners. Of those inscribed on the list some fifty were not forthcoming. It was in vain that Laquèze pointed out that since it was drawn up, a decade before, a good number of the prisoners had been cleared out into the hospitals. Goullin "blustered and raged," vowing that he could not be content with such a scanty harvest, and that as they went by they would take out of the hospital as many as were short at Le Bouffay. The idea was declared a happy one, but would there be time to carry it out? Tintelin, the man who had lingered cowering in his cell despite the repeated

[1] Evidence of Laquèze (*Arch. Muns.*; Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 32).

[2] Deposition of Laquèze (*Arch. Muns.*, &c.; Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 32).

call of his name, thus escaped detection, caught some snatches of talk, which he afterwards recorded. "Hey there, Durassier! Bring me along another one." "Here he is; I hand him over to you." "Come, let's make haste, the tide is going down." "Here, take a swig of brandy." Then the thick voice of a drunken man called obstinately in the courtyard: "Titelin . . . Tatelin . . . Tintelin—where is he then? Pillet senior—Pillet junior—Martin. They are in hospital. Let's make haste, there's four o'clock; we shall certainly not be able to go there."[1]

And, in fact, they had to relinquish the idea. Before Goullin and Grandmaison could have found time to muster their men for a raid on the hospital, similar to that on Le Bouffay, the night would have been over, and they wanted to have done before dawn. Nevertheless, they thought the result a wretched one, only a hundred men odd! What a paltry "bathing party"! But Goullin suddenly remembered something. "I sent you fifteen this evening," said he to the porter. "What hast done with them?"

Laquèze replied that he had lodged them in "the upper room"; they were fifteen men of

[1] Evidence of Tintelin (*Arch. Muns. de Nantes;* Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 30).

Guérande, "with wide breeches," taken when the Vendean army was routed. They had reached Nantes that very day, and had not as yet undergone any examination.

"Well, then," ordered Goullin, "let them be brought down to me.[1] They are as good as any others." [2]

They thus made up a hundred and twenty; but these were still not enough for him and Grandmaison.

Then they took all that they found, at haphazard. Poignan, mad with terror, had taken refuge in the latrines, but they dragged him out to pinion him. However, at the entreaty of Dame Laquèze, he was not taken away.[3]

Durassier, staggering with drunkenness, grabbed all he could reach, and was heard bawling, "March, b——s! Like the rest." [4]

By this time they had a hundred and twenty-nine.[5] They must needs content themselves

[1] Deposition of Laquèze (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 68, p. 271).

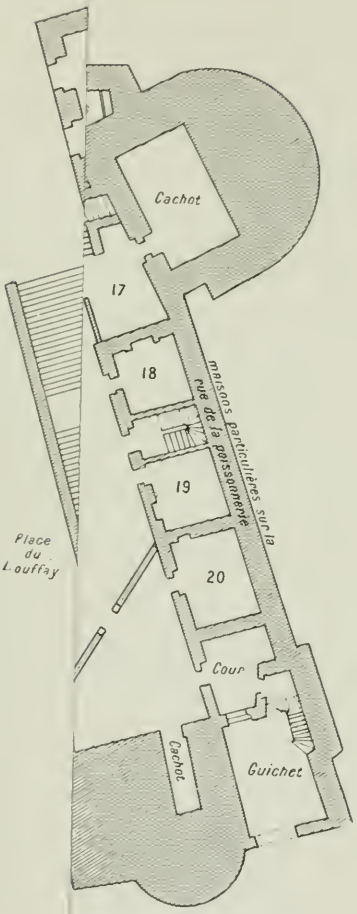
[2] Evidence of Hervé Poupon (Bachelier's *Notes*).

[3] *Archives Nationales*, F. 7, 4422.

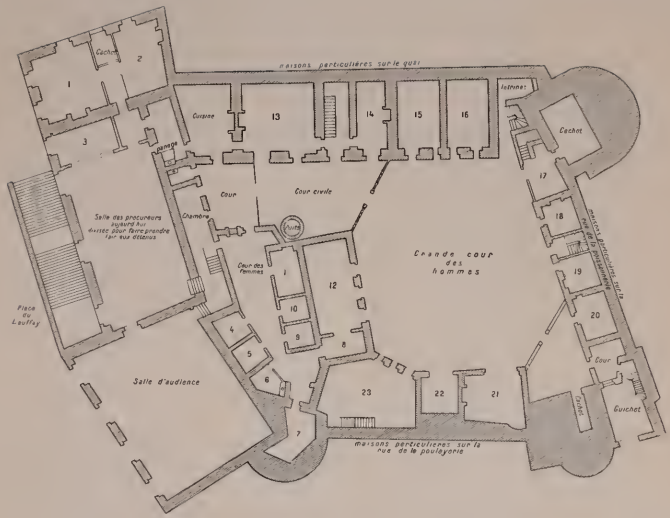
[4] Affidavit of Jeanne Laillet (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 71, p. 282).

[5] Here is a list of them, published, I believe, for the first time. I found it with other papers emanating from Phélippes-Tronjolly, in case F. 7, 4422, of the *National Archives*.

"List of those confined in the house of detention of Le Bouffay, and handed over on the evening of Frimaire 24th to Citizens Goullin and Grandmaison, members of the Revolutionary Committee of Nantes. To wit, (1) Jean André, escaped



To face Page 132.



PLAN OF LE BOUFFAY (YEAR V.).

Municipal Archives of Nantes.

herewith, for the most difficult part remained still to be done. Goullin, to reinforce his band of drunken "Marats," had called for soldiers

from the galleys; (2) Passeuse, surnamed La Feuillade, not tried; (3) Min. Rainbaule, ditto; (4) Guibert, escaped from the galleys; (5) Antoine Rivière, tried; (6) Poupelard, ditto; (7) Pierre Yvon, ditto; (8) Jacques Durand, ditto; (9) Antoine Bouton, ditto; (10) Jacques Richard, ditto; (11) P. Yvert, ditto; (12) Joseph Guilbaud, ditto; (13) G. Morisseau, ditto; (14) Min. Bahuhaud, ditto; (15) Montaroux, surnamed La Forêt, ditto; (16) Min. Prioux, ditto; (17) Jean Marchand, not tried; (18) P. Rochard, tried; (19) Antoine Franac, ditto; (20) Joseph Pichard, ditto; (21) Julien le Roi, ditto; (22) Mel. Carimalot, not tried; (23) Louis de Launay, not tried; (24) Laurencin, tried; (25) Deslandes, ditto; (26) Charles Anna, ditto; (27) Thibaud Mayer, ditto; (28) Vincent Gérard, ditto; (29) Louis Guibour, ditto; (30) Min. Bouvier, ditto; (31) N. (?) James, ditto; (32) Jean Durand, ditto; (33) Jean Gouraud, untried; (34) Alexis Garnier, tried; (35) Mal. Roncin, ditto; (36) Jean Jacques, untried; (37) Louis Gibert, tried; (38) Joseph Gibert, ditto; (39) Coniam, ditto; (40) Cormerais Clouët, ditto; (41) Sebastien Guilbaud, on appeal to the Convention; (42) Jean Luneau, the same; (43) Jean Vrignaud, the same; (44) G. Jannet, untried; (45) René Raimoux, on appeal to the Convention; (46) Min. Landry, the same; (47) Gérard, the same; (48) Le Chauff, ditto; (49) Julien Forey, same; (50) Joseph le Roy, same; (51) G. (?) Vallière, ditto; (52) Julien Bassin, same; (53) Fois. le Fèvre, ditto; (54) Jacques le Maire, same; (55) Min. David, ditto; (56) Isaac Chabot, same; (57) Jean Roulois, same; (58) Fois. Bernier, ditto; (59) Fois. Couturier, same; (60) P. (?) Prin (?), same; (61) Fois. Guitteux, same; (62) Julien Delbos, same; (63) Honoré Charpentier, same; (64) Fois. Corniau, same; (65) Fois. Cerebe, same; (66) G. (?) Gaboret, same; (67) Min. Breteché, same; (68) Le Tourneux, untried; (69) Min. Bouillé, same; (70) G. (?) Janet, same; (71) Julien Rondeau, remitted to the Convention; (72) Chas. le Roy, same; (73) Nas. Rocher, same; (74) Jean Coué, same; (75) P. Dubourg, same; (76) Plantier junior, same; (77) Antoine Normand, same; (78) Thomas,

from the central post at the Port-au-Vin.[1] These were National Guards, all citizens of Nantes, to whom the horrible duty was far from pleasing. They obeyed, nevertheless. One of them as he entered Le Bouffay knocked against René Naux of the "Marats," whom he recognised and greeted by name. "The devil!" rejoined Naux, "I know my name. But you

escaped from galleys; (79) Jean du Coin, remitted to the Convention; (80) G. (?) Forin, untried; (81) Charles Léon, remitted to the Convention; (82) Fois. Teneau (?), untried; (83) G. (?) Priée, remitted to the Convention; (84) André Drouet, untried; (85) Min. le Roy, same; (86) Jean Rotier, same; (87) René Nocret, same; (88) G. Bahuhaud, same; (89) Joseph Chevalier, ditto; (90) Louis Gervier, remitted to the Convention; (91) Jean Boucard, untried; (92) Fois. Boureau, same; (93) Jean Hamon, same; (94) René Guérin, same; (95) Julien Michaut, remitted to the Convention; (96) Chas. Rouleau, same; (97) Julien Pineau, untried; (98) Fois. Glemeau; (99) Bediguand, untried; (100) Etienne Gauchaud (?), same; (101) G. (?) Gaubin, same; (102) Julien Touté, same; (103) Bouraigal (or Bournigal), same; (104) Ganache, same; (105) Etienne Morel, remitted to Convention; (106) Jean Durand, untried; (107) Jean Santerre, same; (108) Jean Brossard, same; (109) Louis Bien, same; (110) Robert Martin, same; (111) Julien Yviquel, same; (112) Jean Olivier, same; (113) Fois. Mahé, same; (114) Mel. Avenard, not tried; (115) Yves Rousseau, same; (116) G. (?) Mahé, same; (117) Jean Audrain, same; (118) G. (?) Mahé; same; (119) Denis Guillot, same; (120) Gabriel Guillaume, same; (121) Jean Giffray, same; (122) Nas. Gohin, tried; (123) G. (?) Gohin, ditto; (124) Marchand, not tried; (125) Beaudouin, ditto; (126) G. (?) Rortais, same; (127) G. (?) Berranger, same; (128) Glle. (?) Le Mauff (?), same; (129) Fois. Le Gal, ditto."

[1] *Courrier* of Brumaire 11th, year III., p. 15. Deposition of Lechantre.

must not call me by it; I am none too much at my ease here already." [1]

The symptom is worth recording, for it shows how much even those who seemed to carry the most zeal into this hideous task felt alarm, and mayhap shame also.

Thanks to the reinforcement of National Guards, Goullin and Grandmaison succeeded at length in getting the first squads of victims under way for the place of embarkation. To reach this the whole length of the La Fosse Quay had to be followed, a distance of more than half a league. The night was very dark.[2] Cabs were to convey the less vigorous,[3] while the remainder, bound, as we have seen, in batches of eighteen or twenty, were to cover the distance on foot.

"It is time, let us be off," Grandmaison declared finally.[4]

Ducou and Jolly, taking leave of Bernard Laquèze, added by way of farewell: "Hope to see you again; we shall come back soon and

[1] *Courrier* of Brumaire 11th, year III., p. 15. Deposition of Lechantre.

[2] *Courrier* of Brumaire 30th, year III., p. 86.

[3] A clerk in the Taxing Office, Etienne Burgault, crossing the square of Le Bouffay about eleven or twelve at night, noticed "a stir, *some carriages*, files of prisoners." Curiosity prompted him to go down to the prison, where he stayed till three in the morning (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 83, p. 330).

[4] Affidavit of Gervais Poupon (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 87, p. 368).

do as much again, and relieve you of still more. We have taken in a nice little lot to-day." [1]

The first batch got under way, ringed round by soldiers, who escorted it as far as the Robin slip.[2] Grandmaison and Goullin were already there, and also some of the "Marats"—Coussin, Petit, Bataillé, Jolly, René Naux, Pinatel, Crespin, Boulay, and Bouvier. Thus the escort was able to return to Le Bouffay for a fresh batch of prisoners. But nothing was ready at the *cale*. Petit ran to awaken the shipwright Affilé.[3]

Let the reader picture the agony of the doomed as they waited there; their wrists lacerated by their bonds, trembling with fear and cold, standing on the verge of the river which was to engulf them, whose broad, swift current they could faintly divine through the gloom from the sound of its lapping waters.

[1] Deposition of Jeanne Laillet (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 71, p. 282).

[2] René Naux's testimony (*Courrier* of Vendémiaire 29th, year III., p. 391). At Nantes the name *cale* is given to a sloping quay, the trend of which facilitates the unloading of ships at all states of the tide—*e.g.* the "Cale aux foins" (hay), "Cale aux oranges." These *cales* were ordinarily known by the name of the merchants whose business they served—*e.g.* "Cale Chaurand," "Cale Sagory," and so on. According to the testimony of Leroi, the "Cale Robin" lay at the extreme end of La Fosse, not far from the site of the present Harbour Station.

[3] Petit's evidence (*Archives Municipales*, &c.; Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 33).

Some still laboured under a delusion, and dreaded, not death by drowning, which they held unlikely, but that they were being taken to be shot. They tried to soften their executioners with entreaty, begging "to serve their country."[1] Even one of the "Marats," Pinatel, could not believe in the hecatomb. He still thought it possible they were being merely transferred to some island on the coast.

"What, fool!" cried a better informed comrade in his ear, "don't you see they are going to drown them?"[2]

Affilé, however, did not arrive on the scene, and already the second batch of victims from Le Bouffay had joined the first; soon a third appeared,[3] amid an uproar of noise. Their clamorous passage had awakened the sleeping burghers. Citizeness Lavigne, from her house on the Quai Bouguer, hearing "piercing cries," got out of bed, put her head out of the window and saw, "going in the direction of the water," a band of folks "in nightcaps," scarcely able to walk, and surrounded by soldiers. One of the escort continually abused the most crippled. "Come on, you beggarly b——s; I'll land you

[1] Julien Leroi's evidence (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 63, p. 249).

[2] Bachelier's *Notes*. Pinatel's evidence.

[3] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 63, p. 249, and *Courrier*, Vendémiaire 29th, year III., p. 391.

a hundred whacks with the flat of my sword if you don't get along more quickly." [1]

The last convoy was that of the crippled, the sick, and the dying deported from the prison infirmary and conveyed in carriages as far as the "Cale Robin," where Goullin and Grandmaison were by this time becoming restless. The unfortunates, maddened by delay, and whose number had now grown considerable, were groaning and protesting in an alarming manner. To calm them they were told "they were to be employed in the erection of a fort." Next they were marched off in search of a boat. From the avenue of the Bois de Launay,[2] Grandmaison brought them back towards the guardhouse of the Machine, at the foot of the Rue des Trois Matelots. Petit, a "Marat," on seeing this retrograde movement, cried: "You are taking them back to Le Bouffay. Good evening, I am going to bed." [3] And he went home,[4] thinking the game was put off. Goullin and Grand-

[1] Deposition of Citizeness Lavigne (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 76, p. 302).

[2] Julien Leroi writes "de Lamourette." Maybe among the people of Nantes, from which Leroi came, the wood of Launay was so called. It lay at the end of a walk giving on La Fosse, "a delicious thoroughfare, which the owner has from time immemorial been good enough to open to the public" (*Annales Nantaises*, year III., p. 647).

[3] Petit's affidavit (*Archives Municipales*, &c.; Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 33).

[4] Rue de Launay, No. 1 (Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 33).

maison troubled little about restraining him. Their colleagues Mainguet and Bollogniel had returned, and a "gabare" having at last been discovered, it was hastily prepared. Affilé took the matter in hand, but finding it more than he could manage single-handed, called for one of his fellows, bidding him "bring his hammer, axe, and gouge." Under the very eyes of the doomed men they cut open the sides of the vessel, so as to make two ports,[1] whose openings were to be closed with planks merely nailed. As the blows of hatchet and hammer rung out through the night,[2] those destined to the hideous torture could no longer cherish any doubt. Then it was that Alexis Garnier, the same clerk whom Jolly had bound so tightly by pressing hard with his knee, succeeded by a desperate effort in freeing himself from the ropes which linked him to his fellow-sufferer James. He was free; darting forward, he disappeared towards the guard-house of the Machine. He at least would be saved,[3] it seemed; but Grandmaison, wondering at the confusion in his flock, drew near to the group, counted it, found that a man

[1] "Affilé told me they pierced two little port-holes of eighteen inches apiece" (evidence of Tabouret, sail-maker at Nantes; *Bulletin*, vi., No. 79, p. 714).

[2] "There were carpenters tapping and clashing" (Bouvier's evidence, Bachelier's *Notes*).

[3] "Thanks to the help of an officer of the post" (*Bulletin*, viii., p. 55).

was missing, questioned the rest, objurgated and threatened, called for help, and, taking his pistol by the muzzle, struck at their heads haphazard right and left with the butt. Bataillé, running up at his chief's call, sabred James, who lay mangled where he fell. Others who, in the unreasoning horror of death, had succeeded in loosening their bonds and were jostling each other and trying to escape, were overtaken and "cut to pieces,"[1] while Goullin rushed off in pursuit of Garnier, and, candle in hand, was circling round all the structures and sheds which encumbered the quay in search of the fugitive, who, as it proved, could not be found.

They must therefore needs make up their minds to let him live, at least for that night; moreover, the lighter was now ready, and Grandmaison restored discipline by loading it with his human cattle. A ladder was fixed against the side of the vessel to facilitate the process, Jolly and Mainguet superintending.[2] As it was impossible to handle these entangled bunches of men, there was no alternative but to cut the cords which held them together; so long as their wrists were bound, what did it matter?[3] But to

[1] Lallié, *Noyades*, on the strength of evidence preserved in the *Archives Municipales* and *Bulletin*, viii., p. 55.

[2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 58, p. 230.

[3] "Our bonds were cut to facilitate our descent, one after another" (evidence of Julien Leroi, *Bulletin*, vi., No. 63, p. 249).

descend a ladder without the help of hands is no easy business, and to hasten the embarking Grandmaison seized the poor wretches by the collar and threw them, one above the other, into the lighter. There they struggled in a heap, howling with terror, appealing and begging for mercy. "Oh my God! Oh, for pity's sake! Can it be that Republicans are acting in such a way?" [1]

Some "Marats" were called in to bring order into this palpitating turmoil. They struck heavy blows at random with the butts of their guns, profiting by the occasion to search closely these writhing bodies, and filch watches, silver buckles, shoes, and money.[2]

The grim lading was completed amid this uproar. Grandmaison had flung in the last, and the jeering voice of Jolly was heard crying that "they will have a fair wind and soon be there." [3]

With some difficulty the "Marats" got clear and climbed up again. Forthwith the hatch was closed and carpenters began to secure it with blows of the hammer; but in a last despairing effort the bellowing cargo piled itself together, writhing frantically, and gave the crazy woodwork so mighty a heave that they raised the

[1] Bachelier's *Notes*. Evidence of Pierre Chartier.
[2] Evidence of Julien Leroi.
[3] *Idem*.

planking of the deck. The ruffians hastily nailed rings on the panels,[1] and the order was given to cast loose.

Goullin had not left the quay. Bollogniel, who was also there, will testify later on that Carrier himself came to witness the lading, that he chatted with Goullin "and murmured orders in his ear." [2] The lighter, guided by Affilé and his carpenters, took the stream and disappeared in the night, floating down the river.

On the lid of this great gliding coffin, full of uproar and groans, sat Grandmaison and the men of his gang; they were singing uproariously, to drown the cries of their victims.[3]

"To Cheviré Island," commanded Affilé in a low tone.

Cheviré is a bank of low earth, the spit of which lies down-stream of Trentemoult, at a point where the width of the river, divided into several branches, attains 1700 feet. The lighter glided with the stream, towing two little boats, which the assassins would presently use to reach the bank. René Naux had just made use of one of them to carry an order signed by Goullin to the gunners on guard at the pontoon

[1] Evidence of Chartier (Lallié, *Noyades*).

[2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 61, p. 242. Goullin did not deny the allegation.

[3] Affidavit of Gauthier (*Bulletin*, vi., p. 356).

of La Sécherie to "let them pass."[1] The lighter passed in due course, and was soon level with Chantenay. Affilé gave warning that the critical moment was at hand.[2]

His workmen descended into the boats and prepared to open the ports to admit the water. But the uproar from the hold of the lighter continued to augment, and cries of "Save us! Save us! There is yet time!"[3] rang through the night.

Most of the doomed, heaped together like dung in this floating oubliette, had succeeded in unfastening their bonds. Thereupon a frightful scene ensued; their fingers clutched and convulsively tore aside the planks, which, yielding, revealed a crowd of hands and arms, tossed in gestures of despair. The "Marats" were seized with alarm, and while the shipwrights, hacking at the planks, opened the ports for the whirling wave, Grandmaison, wielding his sabre like a sickle, severed these beseeching hands and writhing arms, plunging his blade into the gaps, and piercing at random[4] his unseen adver-

[1] Affidavit of Louis Naux (*Courrier*, Vendémiaire 9th, year III.).

[2] Evidence of Grandmaison (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 79, p. 315).

[3] Deposition of Tabouret (or Tabouré), the sail-maker, one of Affilé's journeymen (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 79. p. 314).

[4] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 84, p. 335. Crespin deposed: "I was on the lighter, and saw the poor wretches thrust arms and

saries, whose prison, invaded by the water, sank slowly and evenly;[1] its inmates on the point of suffocation, uttering shrieks of terror so piercing that they were heard even in the city.[2]

The Loire did not keep the secret of what had befallen in this great sunken tomb even till the jaded assassins got back to shore. As the waves filled and silenced those howling mouths, overwhelming their heads and flinging hither and thither the bodies of such as clung to the sides of the lighter, one had remained desperately clinging and suspended by the hands to an opening of the hatch. It was the body of Julien Leroi, that egg-dealer whom Grandmaison and Ducou had so brutally bound in the kitchen of Le Bouffay.

Julien Leroi was not dead. At the moment of embarkation, when flung to the bottom of the lighter, he had cut with his teeth the rope that still bound him to his fellow; the latter in turn unbound him also, and when the water

hands through the gaps. I saw Grandmaison ply his sword on the unfortunates. I saw him plunge it through one of the gaps, and I heard a captive call out, 'Oh, the ruffian, he is running me through!'"

[1] "The lighter went down quite gently and plumb" (evidence of Grandmaison, *Bulletin*, vi., No. 79, p. 315).

[2] Vernet, edge-toolmaker, heard from his bed "about a year ago the shrieks of the drowned" (*Courrier*, Brumaire 10th, year III., p. 87).

rushed into the vessel, Leroi, whose hands were free, remained clinging despite the terrible eddy. The lighter, sunk on a shallow, did not go down wholly. Her upper port remained above the water, which, finding its level, left between its surface and the deck of the vessel a space sufficient to allow Leroi's head to rise above it.

He could thus breathe, but in what a horrible position! We have his own narrative of that night of terror. It will be read below, given at length. It does not seem that the poor fellow felt any great emotion; the only thing that struck him was that he was still alive, and he gloried in the thought. All else mattered little to him. He says nothing of his sensations when the outcry of his fellows suddenly came to an end in that terrifying obscurity; nothing of the dying men whom he felt jostle and writhe around him: he floated "for two hours upon corpses." At daybreak—the drowning, though no one gives the exact time, must have taken place after five in the morning—Leroi heard a boat pass and hailed the boatman who, without appearing either astonished or horrified, climbed on the deck of the sunk lighter, cut a hole in it with his boat-hook, and threw a rope to the survivor, whom he took on board his boat and carried ashore.

Leroi went straight to the guard-house. He was almost naked; he said he came from Montoir and had been shipwrecked. The soldiers lent him a cloak and took him before the Revolutionary Committee, where he found Bollogniel, Lévêque, Perrochaud, Jolly the deputy, and Bachelier, who was presiding. On seeing the poor wretch, shivering and dying of distress, these worthy dignitaries realised whence he came. "They looked at him and burst into laughter." But Jolly, whose vanity as an author was at stake, since he was one of the organisers of the drowning, took a severe view of this insolent fellow, this refractory, who had the effrontery not to be dead; he decided that he should be "pitched back into the water." Bachelier, for fear of vexing his colleague, gave the order that Leroi should be taken back to Le Bouffay, and "led out" that evening with the others. But the eggman got off with a hundred days in durance on bread and water.

Alexis Garnier, who, as will be remembered, escaped before the embarkation, had made his way to Nantes itself, to the house of a friend. There he remained in hiding for three months, waiting for a chance to get on board a ship. One day, having been rash enough to leave his hiding-place, he encountered the turn-

key of Le Bouffay, Joson Gérardeau, who seized him by the collar and dragged him before the Committee. Goullin abused him roundly. "What, rascal, is that you? I used a whole candle looking for you, but you shall pay me well for it."

He was reincarcerated at Le Bouffay, and thrown into an underground dungeon. "Don't trouble," he was told, "we shall come back one of these days for you, and you will make one with the others."

And they came indeed to look for him. But it was in the hour when the Committee, now muzzled, was cast into prison in its turn. We shall come across Leroi and Garnier once more at Paris, bearing testimony before the avenging Tribunal to the deeds they had witnessed.

CHAPTER VII

THE TERROR

He who seeks at Nantes for reminders and traces of the revolutionary period is misled by the wholly modern appearance of the Square of Le Bouffay, where nothing remains of what was there of yore. The La Fosse Quay awakens more memories with its admirable line of old buildings, their balconies supported by chimæras, their sculptured heads of fauns or sirens, witnesses of so many sights, whose horrors they seem still to retain in the fixity of their stony eyes. But to him who seeks to make the past live again, the most moving spot in the city is the dark staircase of the Hôtel de la Villetreux in Little Holland—the staircase of the house where Carrier dwelt.[1] It is solemn, severe, bare, and terrible. On its steps have echoed the boots of Lamberty, over them has trailed the sabre of Grandmaison, the pumps of Goullin have slouched. The furs of the Proconsul have

[1] This semi-palace was built in 1727 by a very rich colonist from St. Domingo, M. de La Villetreux, who spent in its erection 500,000 livres, the third part of his fortune (*Souvenirs de Nantes avant et pendant la Révolution,* by Fr. Lefeuvre).

View of Little Holland and the Port of Nantes.
Taken from the Windows of Carrier's Rooms in the Hôtel de la Villestreux.
(Cabinet of Prints, National Library.)

To face Page 118.

brushed these walls, and his oaths have wakened the echoes beneath these arches. How many have mounted that staircase with hearts stricken with anguish, only to descend in despair!

From the date of his coming to Nantes, Carrier occupied part of the first floor of this mansion, requisitioned as a lodging for the Conventionals. From its windows he looked down on the Loire, and the view extended to the distances, thick with phantoms, of Les Salorges and Chantenay. All day he could contemplate this tragic horizon; for he went out but little, going to bed at six in the morning and rising at noon.[1] When night fell he showed himself, visiting, generally in a carriage, the People's Society,[2] the Committee,[3] or, when executions were afoot, the Square of Le Bouffay.[4] How did he spend his days? In work, so he declared; in reality he lived in a sort of grim and sensual ease, mingling in his elfish thoughts plans for massacres and bestial delights. Was he mad? Maybe so.

From a little country attorney, cribbed in chicanery and professional trickeries, the lottery of revolution and the folly of the Committee of Safety had turned him into an omnipotent

[1] *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 33. [2] Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 71.
[3] *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 13. [4] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 86, p. 335.

autocrat, armed with a power ampler than that which their kings had exercised. He had his armies, his tribunals, his treasury; the People's Society was his parliament, but without right of remonstrance. The Committee, corrupt as any gang of galley slaves, was his subservient council; the Marat Company his Prætorian Guard. What wonder that such a sudden and monstrous transformation should have turned the brain of a man hitherto forced into feigned humility, and bound to the mortifying restrictions of a narrow life, whose hopeless youth had been cloistered among the musty papers of a dingy lawyer's office, to find himself later, without any intermediate process and without restraint of any kind, transformed into an idol, a Tiberius, feared, all-powerful, adulated, and wielding that formidable enforcer of obedience, the power of death?

The Revolutionary Government, in thus delegating its indisputable authority, based itself theoretically, in Spartan fashion, upon the virtue and heroism of its delegates; in fact, had it not almost always deceived itself regarding these, its emissaries might have signalised themselves by lofty and brilliant achievements. But alas! not one proved worthy of this boundless confidence. Carrier for one was neither

virtuous nor heroic, but, like an odious Cæsar of contrabandists, gorged himself with everything of which life had hitherto deprived him. He was insolent because he was low, cruel because he was embittered, prodigal because he had been poor, debauched because he had been forced cunningly to check his unsated depravity. In his sway as Proconsul he saw nothing but a cynical revenge for his niggardly past.

The task would have been great and noble for a true man—to save one of the richest cities in France from ruin, to pacify La Vendée, and make the Republic known and beloved. And we are amazed to behold with what artless consistency the heads of the most varied departments waited on the Proconsul, who was fain to absorb all powers, yet resolved to free himself from all responsibilities. On the staircase of his mansion there was a perpetual coming and going of officials in search of advice, to receive orders or render account of daily happenings. But Carrier was most of the time inaccessible, or if he received his suitors, it was only to throw them out.

Guimberteau, inspector-general of the republican vehicles, wanted to consult the Representative on the lamentable state of his department. "The horses are dying of hunger

in the street, the waggons are scattered in all directions, uncovered and broken, while the men have received no pay." Guimberteau could not get beyond the lobby. A whipper-snapper of a secretary, pert and peevish—he was known as *Marat* [1]—sent for four fusiliers and turned the citizen inspector-general of republican transport out of doors.[2] The latter attended a few days later at the mansion in Little Holland, and the following is an account he gave to a friend of his brief interview with the Proconsul: "There is something I cannot exactly define. I have just this moment come back from speaking to Citizen Carrier, who told me he would see to our affair when he chose; that he wanted to have a rest, and cared not a damn for any Boards; that he would have them all guillotined when he took them in hand. I tried to insist, but he treated me as a *simpleton*. In fact, I saw that in a moment he would have me turned out by the grenadiers of his guard." [3]

Deputations were no better received. Forget, the "Grand Lama," and Champenois, a city magnate, came with several tried patriots to debate of urgent measures to be taken touching the war in the Vendée. A clerk—a greenhorn,

[1] Affidavit of Fois. Bignon (Bachelier's *Notes*).
[2] *Pièces remises*, p. 35. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 36.

said to be a relative of Carrier's [1]—gave them to understand his master was ill, no one could have speech of him; for three weeks he had dropped all correspondence, and would not deal with any matter. The solicitants insisted, laying stress on their civic virtues and on the importance of their mission.

"Though you were the most rabid of patriots, he would listen to you none the more."

Still they vowed they wanted most urgently to have speech of the Representative. If they only were informed as to his whereabouts.

"I know nothing about it. He is not at Nantes. I have no more to say to you." [2]

This indifference in a man without whom they dared not undertake anything was the cause of disasters. His embargo was the death-blow of trade; Vendée and Lower Brittany, whence the city drew its supplies, no longer sent in anything. The peasants, seized with terror, ceased to bring in their wares for sale. For that matter all the country on the right bank was laid waste, and the left was in the hands of Charette. Nantes was dying of hunger, the most well-to-do inhabitants stood

[1] They called him "Carrier junior," but his name was Picaud. The Deputy had brought him from Rennes to Nantes (*Pièces remises*, p. 91).

[2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 76, p. 303.

in queues at the bakers' doors to procure them a bit of bread, or begged at the barracks for the remnants of the soldiers' rations, ever disposed to charity.[1] The Deputy had let it be known that he was to hear no more of this state of things; these questions of commissariat wearied him out. What? Those miserable Nantais had the effrontery to complain? They had nothing to put their teeth into? Let them eat ordure! said Carrier.[2]

For his part he wanted for nothing. Every day, before the market opened, his cook "snapped up" at any price the fattest poultry,[3] and at the hospital bakery they made milk-rolls for his table, which were brought him in a napkin.[4] One day, however, as supplies had been wholly lacking for nearly a week, and the people of the city were "raising loud outcries," Renard, the Mayor, came to the Hôtel de La Villetreux, where he danced attendance for two hours, and at last getting in almost by force, found the Representative in the company of a

[1] *Souvenirs*, by Fr. Lefeuvre. "There are times appointed for the distribution of bread at the bakers', and each waits his turn to get some" (*Lettres d'un bourgeois nantais*, 1793–5; *Revue rétrospective*, 1902).

[2] Evidence of Godin, clerk at the Supply Office (Bachelier's *Notes*).

[3] *Pièces remises*. &c., p. 22.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 91.

citizeness. Carrier, furious at being disturbed, flew into a rage.

"How is it the sentry did not thrust his bayonet through your guts? My excessive kindness and weakness will be the ruin of me."

His companion sought to banish such gloomy forebodings from his mind.

"No, citizen Representative, you will not ruin yourself."

But he would not be mollified. He who had showed the white feather at Cholet and hid himself on the only occasion when he came in contact with the Vendeans, now played the braggart and blustered, rolling his "r's."[1]

"I will undertake to go the round of Vendée with a distaff and bring back all the supplies in it."

But he took mighty good care to run no such risk. Renard tried to argue, but withdrew in face of the threat of being cut down or guillotined, so that he went quaking to bed that very evening and "was ill a very long time."[2]

The national agent, Bonami, tried in his turn to do something and found Carrier in bed, bawling from out his bolsters: "The first

[1] *Courrier*, Brumaire 29th, year III.
[2] *Bulletin*, vii., No. 2, p. 5.

b—— that talks to me about supplies, I'll p—— his head off! I have enough to do with all your follies!"[1]

Bonami waited for no more, but went back at a run to the Common Lodging, while the people of Nantes continued to tighten their belts. When it was a matter of a deputation to the Representative, no one was willing to take part.[2] People dreaded to face the tyrant, and "public functionaries preferred to suspend their administrative duties" rather than venture to confront him.[3] The bravest shunned the awful sight of this madman, all arms and legs, frightfully thin, his back somewhat bowed, with a long face, copper complexion, slanting and deep-set eyes, the colour of blood and bile, the keen, sharp nose of a voluptuary,[4] and a disdainful mouth. They dreaded his bitter voice, his railings, his sudden angers, his bellowings, like those of a famished wild beast. He spared nothing and nobody; scarcely had he been ten days at Nantes when he vented a desire to decimate the merchants of the city.[5] His colleague Ruelle, reminding him that the measure

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 75, p. 298. [2] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 73, p. 291.

[3] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 75, p. 298. Lenoir, President of the Military Committee, testifies to the same effect. "No member of the administrative bodies," he says, "ventured to present himself at the President's" (*ibid.*, vi., No. 97, p. 386).

[4] *Courrier*, Brumaire 29th, year III. [5] *Pièces remises*, p. 13.

was impolitic and barbarous, was called "a b—— of a soft-water revolutionary," and browbeaten in fine fashion. Phélippes-Tronjolly, President of the Revolutionary Tribunal, despatched a "Marat," Crespin the wigmaker, to Carrier to inquire whether he was to include two children of fourteen and two others of thirteen in a guillotining of untried victims. The Representative, as indignant as stupefied at such an absurd question, turned round towards the fireplace, swearing: "God curse it a thousand times! In what country am I? One is just as bad as the others." [1]

We can imagine that if he greeted his most intimate followers thus, he showed still less respect for ordinary accomplices. Adjutant-General Hector Legros was received with great whirlings of a sabre, but turned tail and reached the door, which received the blow.[2] A policeman who often took letters to the Conventional declared that he "was more like a roaring lion than a delegate of the people," [3] while Moutier the smith, being sent for on a matter of requisitioning wines, dared not go beyond the lobby. Through the open door he heard Carrier talking to Lamberty, Fouquet, and Robin.

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 84, p. 335. [2] Bachelier's *Notes*.
[3] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 94, p. 373.

"You must do the business after dinner to-day, without any exception whatever."

"Do not trouble yourself, Representative of the People, your affair shall be accomplished this evening."

The blacksmith took care not to show himself. "All the talk I heard," he said, "was of swording and cutting down. I was afraid of being cut down too."

Nevertheless, when Fouquet came out, Moutier asked him what it was about.

"Come to-night at three to the Sécherie and you will see," replied the drowner artlessly.

That night there was a drowning of men, women, and children.[1]

But his tone changed toward those who came to ask a favour. Citizen Throuard betook himself to the Hôtel de la Villetreux to beg for the liberation of Dorvo, former attorney of the Borough, one of the hundred and thirty-two notables of Nantes delegated to the Revolutionary Tribunal of Paris. While waiting his turn for an audience he caught this speech of Carrier's, bawling in the next room. "What way does this blasted Revolutionary Committee work? Five hundred heads should have been off, and I don't see one yet."

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 80, p. 319, and Bachelier's *Notes*.

Throuard was shown in, but scarcely had he set forth the object of his solicitation when Carrier seized a candlestick and rushed at his petitioner to belabour him. Throuard tried hard to put a good face on it, but was pitched out on to the staircase.[1]

A young working tailoress of the city, Perrotte Brevet,[2] imbued with the prejudices of the old régime, took it into her head that she would obtain the liberation of her brother, a prisoner at the Entrepôt, if she went and beseeched the tyrant, as of yore folks had entreated the king. It was about January 10, 1794.

"How old is your brother?" "Thirty-six." "He is fit to be pitched into the water. If he were only eighteen I might give him back to you; but as it is, he must die, and plenty of others after him, and three-fourths of the city of Nantes."

Perrotte was seized with alarm and made off. But, ashamed of her weakness, she came back a few days later; she would greatly like to see her brother in his prison and learn what fate was in store for him. The Representative rejoined that this was very simple; all the prisoners would be drowned "without other formalities." The work-girl threw herself on

[1] *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 12.

[2] Or Brevette.

her knees. What was the verdict condemning her brother? Carrier avowed that it was himself who gave the judgments; if she offended again, he would pitch her into the water with the others. Seizing the sheath of his sword, he struck her, and pushed her towards the door. She went down the steps all in a tremble, but he called her back. She saw now a new man before her, he had found her pretty; he took her hand and tried to kiss her, saying that if she would . . . she could see her brother. But it is better to quote the testimony of this poor girl.

"Thereupon the said Brevet answered him that this was quite out of place, that she did not want to turn one trouble into two; that besides, her honour was the dearest thing she had in the world, and moreover her brother would perhaps be none the better for its sacrifice. After that she said, 'Give me a written permit to go and see my brother.' He replied that he never gave any order in writing, and that she must go to the Revolutionary Committee and look in the registers to see if her brother's name were inscribed. Thereupon she betook herself thither, and several members of the said Committee, unknown to her, told her she had no such right, but that her brother was indeed in the Entrepôt until

he should be put on board for Paimbœuf. Accordingly, the said Brevet set off there next day about eight in the morning, and stayed till six in the evening. She learned at length that her brother was no longer in the prison, but on the vessel, where the prisoners were put to death. She had a piece of bread for him, but was not able to give it him. The commandant of the port of La Sécherie then told her, 'I am not allowed to admit any one whatever without the orders of Carrier.' Accordingly, the said Brevet went off at once to Carrier to ask leave to go near the vessel bearing her brother, that she might give him bread. Carrier then told her that her brother did not want bread, and that *what he had to drink was enough*, adding that if she chose to answer him again he would have her put in the same boat; all of which he said angrily, even taking up a chair to hit her with it. And so the night after they perished with the most abominable cruelty, being vilely struck down with axe-blows." [1]

This same frenzy was carried by the Proconsul into his public doings. Was he unable to control his ravings, or did he fancy that he thereby cowed people and displayed his own fearlessness? He was once seen at the door of a

[1] *Pièces remises*, p. 23 *et seq.*

theatre pursuing, sword in hand, a citizen "who had merely addressed a remark to him."[1] At the People's Society he bellowed that "the people of Nantes were scoundrels, and that bowls ought to be played with their heads."[2] And one evening, when perorating on the rostrum before the panic-stricken patriots, in a fit of frenzy and "to enliven his discourse" he went so far as to sever with heavy back-strokes of his blade the candles which gave light to the assemblage.[3] Such displays were rare, for, as we know, he appeared but little in public. By the middle of January 1794 he had left the mansion in Little Holland, the official abode of Members of the Convention when on circuit, and took refuge, far from all solicitants and troubles, in a suburb—to wit, Bourg-fumé; where, thanks to the terror he inspired, he had requisitioned and obtained the country-house of Citizen Ducros.[4]

This retreat was situated on the road to Tous-Aides,[5] on the right hand towards Doulon. It is a fairly large building, though of an irregular and rustic exterior. In front on the street-side the ground-floor windows and door have been

[1] *Pièces remises*, p. 22.
[2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 80, p. 320.
[3] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 73, p. 290. [4] *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 15.
[5] At the present day the Rue d'Allonville.

DUCROS' HOUSE, CARRIER'S RESIDENCE AT BOURG-FUMÉ.

To face Page 162.

walled up. Was this done as a precaution in Carrier's day? It may be, at least it gives the empty house a blinded and sinister look. A doorway opened on the courtyard, where was a guard-house, in which soldiers were housed who kept watch day and night over the safety of the Representative. The chambers, turned into wine-stores of late years, were comfortable and even elegant; first came a drawing-room, and then the bedroom, with lights towards the garden. The windows, guarded within by solid shutters of oak, were provided with large bolts strongly secured. The ceilings of these two rooms still retain traces of mouldings and rosettes. In the bed-chamber is the deep alcove where Carrier reposed on a bed of yellow damask. The garden is not large, but at the end of the plot, which ran as far as the common of Mauves, still stand two little summer-houses with slate roofs, meant as alcoves or wine-arbours.[1]

It was in this remote mansion that Carrier sought a retreat. Was it that he could no longer bear the sight of the Loire, carrying

[1] Such was the state of the house three years ago. M. Albert, who lived there, kindly permitted me to go over it; but at that time it was on the point of changing hands, and if not pulled down by now, I believe that its demolition is to all intents decided on.

its freight of corpses, borne back by the tide even under the bridges of the Île Feydeau; or did he wish to hide his drink-sodden life? Either explanation is admissible. His servant, Jean Cousine, records that one evening the Proconsul bade him "lock him up in his room," where he remained in confinement till eleven o'clock next morning.[1] By what terrors, by what ghosts was the despot then pursued? For the most part he was not alone; beside casual mistresses provided by Fonbonne,[2] who, in spite of his illiteracy, was, in return for these "gracious services," advanced to be director-general of hospitals, the Representative kept up permanent relations with a splendid courtesan, Angélique Caron, and also a citizeness, Semine Lenormand, who was his accredited favourite. Her husband was director of a refuge, that of L'Humanité, housed in the buildings of the former Ursuline convent. He knew his wife's misconduct, and profited by it. A sempstress, Louise Couraud, who went out by the day, often saw Carrier at Lenormand's house behaving as if at home, swearing, bawling, or storming, and shutting himself up for hours with his mistress. The husband would come home, ask where his wife was, and on being told that

[1] *Pièces remises*, p. 84. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

she was with the Citizen Representative, take himself off discreetly.

Louise Couraud, who did the mending for Carrier as well as for the woman Lenormand, took it into her head one day to claim the price of her day's work, and asked who would pay her. The Conventional, who was there and to whom the request was at once communicated, rejoined, "The guillotine!"

The work-woman thought it prudent to leave the house.[1]

Citizeness Lenormand was at the beck and call of her lover. At eight one morning he sent her word that he was waiting at the door in a carriage. She put on her clothes and went down half-dressed, holding in her hand a locket with the portrait of Carrier, which she had not had time to put round her neck. A fetish![2]

It may be she loved him. We ask ourselves what the intimate intercourse between this woman and such a man could be like. Did he confide to her his thoughts, his plans? Did he talk scaffold, massacre, and drownings to her? Or, sickened and wearied of himself, had he times of abandonment, and show the attentions of a true swain? Did he strive to please her

[1] *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 91. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 91.

and act the tender lover? Either supposition moves to equal horror. If the brutal Carrier inspired panic, the languishings of such a man must seem abhorrent.

At times there were suppers at Dame Lenormand's, and her cook, Olive Recapet, bore in mind that at the close of the meal she would hear the guests, Carrier among them, give the health "of those who had drunk of the big cup." [1] These feasts were held most frequently at the Representative's country-house, and his merry-makings were not without savour. We may assure ourselves of this by the account of one of these brotherly love-feasts.

That day the guests were Fonbonne, Laubry the doctor, and Noël his colleague; Ducros, the ousted owner of the house; Guesdon, captain of a ship and assessor at the Commercial Court; Dujar, the decreer of wars; and some of the "drowners," among them Robin and O'Sullivan. When the two doctors came to the door they were answered that Carrier was not to be seen. Laubry presented his invitation, and the door was thrown open. Carrier caught sight of them from the far end of his garden, and being seized forthwith with an attack of frenzy, came running with a naked sabre in

[1] *Pièces remises à la Commission*, &c., pp. 94, 95.

his hand towards the guests, uttering the cries of a maniac. He rushed at Noël, and passed the edge of his weapon across his neck.

"Thou art not worthy to be guillotined. I am going to settle thy business on the spot."

He was restrained, and explanations were exchanged.

Noël, it appears, had ventured to contend that the insurrection in Vendée did not seem to him as effectively suppressed as was made out, for a great number of wounded were still brought in daily from the left bank of the Loire. Now Carrier did not wish the subject to be raised; since he had swayed the country there could no longer be any rebels. Such was his good pleasure, and he commanded that people should be silent. Noël withdrew in alarm, threw himself into a carriage, and left Nantes that very evening.[1]

Nevertheless, this little incident being dismissed, they went to table at Carrier's, where the talk was such as might be expected among heroes. It was of lofty deeds performed, each man reciting his exploits, and the chat wandered to the muscular strength with which some men are endowed. Thus O'Sullivan admitted that

[1] He set forth his recollections of his chequered career in a pamphlet printed at Reims in 1826, calling it *Noël to his Fellow-citizens.*

he had—or, more properly, that he once had—a brother much stronger than himself. This brother had lately been guillotined, for he had himself denounced him as a royalist. Well, the knife had not been able to cut through the massive muscles of his neck at a stroke. The executioner had been forced to repeat the blow.

Seeing how successful this tender story proved, O'Sullivan kept on in that strain. Assuredly he was far from being as powerful as his brother, but he made up for the lack by skill and agility.

"A man much stronger than I and whom I wanted to drown," he related, "tried to resist me. I stretched him on the ground with several others, and bled him like a sheep with the help of my little knife."

He never parted company with that little knife. He had it upon him, drew it from his pocket and showed it to the guests, who examined it with interest. Captain Guesdon, who was next the story-teller and none too much at his ease, observed that such an operation must be particularly painful to the patient. O'Sullivan replied that he had nevertheless performed it, though certainly by having recourse to stratagem, and young Robin corroborated.

"I had noticed," explained the former, "how butchers bleed sheep. I laid my hand on the shoulder of a prisoner and said to him, 'Ho there! you're a good Republican. Look at so-and-so, he is not like you.' My remark made him turn his head, and I took advantage of the instant to plunge my knife in his neck." [1]

It is impossible for us to conceive how men can attain to such a pitch of savage boasting and bloody love of their calling. It can only be explained by the necessity they experienced of paying court to Carrier. The unworthy Representative had "made volcanoes of men's heads." [2] Each tried who could go the farthest in that respect. Assassination had become a claim to glory. Young Robin used to show the soldiers at the post on the Barbin high-road his bloody and bent sabre, saying, "It has served to sever some sixty heads of brigands whom we drowned last night." [3]

An inspector of victuals, Dhéron, could be seen at the People's Society, without any one venturing to display indignation, wearing by way of trophy a collar of Chouans' ears and human snippets.[4] Bestial cruelty was the

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 97, p. 399 *et seq.*
[2] Bachelier's *Notes*.
[3] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 97, p. 398, and Bachelier's *Notes*.
[4] Buchez and Roux, xxxiv. p. 185, and Bachelier's *Notes*.

order of the day, pity was accounted a crime, and the Revolutionary Committee posted at its door, as well as at those of all its members, the following pitiless warning :—

"The Revolutionary Committee, beset and harassed by perpetual petitions which hamper its labours and counteract its endeavours, determines that henceforth it will be deaf to all representations in favour of prisoners made by their kinsfolk or relatives.

"It even declares that it will regard as suspect any individual who shall intercede [1] for his relative. It warns people further that warrants of liberation must, in order to be valid, bear the signature of eight members at least.

"The porters of the various houses of detention are exhorted sternly to enforce this present regulation. Resolved at the Revolutionary Committee, Frimaire 24th.

"Signed for the President.

"GOULLIN, Secretary."

While eight signatures had to be procured to obtain the freedom of a prisoner, the whim

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 99, p. 401. Goullin remarked that, owing to faulty editing, these words had here been left out, "in the abodes of members of the Committee, that they may not be made the lobbies of Ministers," and that he had inserted them with his own hand on several posters, notably that at his own door.

of a single drunken "Marat" sufficed to decree a man's death. Such was justice at Nantes in Carrier's day.

Is terror an effective means of government? It was the fatal error of the Committee of Public Safety to regard it as a panacea for all our country's ills. Only when it was too late did men see that this devastating remedy was as useless as calamitous. At Nantes its employment was disastrous. Amazed at the plain proof that his mere presence was not pacifying La Vendée and did not suffice to bring back abundance and prosperity, Carrier had recourse to the *fortiter in re*, but still without result. It was very easy to bid *his* generals, *his* armies [1] "set fire to all houses, massacre all the inhabitants, and carry off all the provisions." [2] But in practice this Draconian measure had no other effect than to fan resistance. All agree in admitting that it was

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 76, p. 304.

[2] Buchez and Roux, xxxiv. p. 170. The text of this order was given by Romme in his report to the Twenty-one. "It enters into my plans; it is in purport by the Convention to carry off all the cereals of this countryside, to burn the houses, and wipe out the inhabitants, who have rent their country by a hideous war. Have everything carried off—in a word, let nothing remain in that accursed region. Let everything be sent to Nantes." The order was addressed to General Haxo, and dated Frimaire 28th. It was the origin of the "infernal columns."

Carrier's brutal obstinacy which prolonged the war in Vendée.[1] And what motive could the rebels have had for surrendering, seeing that drowning or shooting was in store for them if they did? Carts, be it said, were wanting to bring back to the city the provisions plundered from the recalcitrant districts; hence the corn was burnt on the spot, as likewise the hay and the ovens, the cattle were slaughtered like their owners, and Nantes continued to die of hunger.

Captains of ships, coming thither for business, found the warehouses closed, the prisons full, the scaffold a permanent institution, and at once took flight without dreaming of going back. Carrier personally was none the worse, since the Convention had placed at his disposal, not indeed 500,000 livres as he boasted, but 200,000,[2] of which he could make such use as he pleased "for the public benefit." From this fund he drew the wages of his drowners, the cost of his "gabares," and the gratuities to his boon companions. Matters, however, went none the better, and being incapable of studying a question, or enlightening himself by advice, he issued absurd decrees from which he expected

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 76, p. 304.

[2] Letter from Bourbotte to Carrier, Dugast-Matifeux Collection, Nantes Library.

wonders. Trade was languishing, food was lacking, so he ordered the arrest "of all buyers, male and female, and of all other dealers in the prime necessaries of life."[1] Being informed that there was a dearth of bran, he decreed that all citizens should deposit in a place appointed such bran as they might have, under penalty of seeing their houses razed at the end of twenty-four hours. A week went by before the storehouse fixed upon was ready and the officials named to receive the merchandise.[2] Strangers dared no longer enter the city, and refused to sell at the maximum; but that made no difference, all middlemen and brokers must be put in prison and prosecuted as corner-makers.[3] Next it was the merchants who, rather than part with their wares at a wretched price, preferred to refrain from dealing; nothing simpler, their shops must be broken open with the axe and put to pillage.[4] Such was Carrier's boasted plan of closing the period of half-measures.[5] And unceasingly, as though desirous of some tremendous cataclysm, he protested imprudently against the unequal division of fortune and

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 98, p. 403.

[2] A. Lallié, *J. B. Carrier*, p. 214.

[3] *Ibid.*, 215.

[4] Evidence of Minée, administrator of the Department (Buchez and Roux, xxxiv. p. 187).

[5] Depositions of Goullin (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 100, p. 409).

enjoyments. "To-day there is war between the beggars and those that have somewhat," exclaimed a Nantais, one of the Revolutionary Committee.[1] Carrier, the lawgiver, held a like opinion! He set himself with a light heart to commit the greatest and most cowardly of social crimes: he excited against the rich the cupidity of the poor, to whom till then all pains had been taken to preach patient resignation, honest and slow striving after prosperity. He declared that merchants were "trustees of the belongings of the people," of the ready money and resources from which all citizens should benefit equally.

"Will you be such fools as to remain in misery while abundance is beside you? Are you not near the water? Have you no daggers?"[2]

Such were his political principles, and he elevated them into a system. Before his guests he set forth the following programme. "Government has reckoned up the population of France, and seen that it is impossible to feed so many people. It has taken measures to lessen the sum and fine away a certain portion—noblemen, magistrates, priests, stockjobbers, the most

[1] *Courrier*, of Brumaire 26th, year III., p. 132.

[2] Speech at the People's Society of Ancenis (Bachelier's *Notes*, evidence of Aaregnaudeau).

palpable enemies of the people.[1] The population is to be reduced to seven hundred per square league instead of the present average of a thousand." [2]

He quoted the alluring instance of Lyons, the number of whose inhabitants was to be reduced to twenty thousand,[3] and wound up by saying: "We will make a graveyard of France rather than not succeed." [4]

It was from hearing these maxims and many others such issue from his mouth that the people of Nantes came to see in Carrier the Destroying Angel.[5]

Under the influence of such a man disorganisation and recklessness became so general that throughout the splendid city which his gang administered all became disorder and lawlessness. To famine, ruin, and the absolute stagnation of commerce and barter was now added pestilence, engendered in the prisons by the superabundance of prisoners, who were left to rot there without either regulation or hygienic precautions.

[1] Deposition of Alexis Monneron, merchant at Nantes (Buchez and Roux, xxxiv. p. 183).

[2] Deposition of Villemain, merchant at Nantes (Buchez and Roux, xxxiv. p. 200).

[3] Bachelier's *Notes*.

[4] Evidence of Lamarie, municipal official at Nantes (Bachelier's *Notes*).

[5] Buchez and Roux, xxxiv. p. 182.

Ever since the day on which disaster befell the Catholic army at Savenay the Entrepôt had been a hell. Eight or ten thousand human beings, the unnamed fragments of the great exodus of Vendée, were confined there promiscuously—villagers, priests, children, gentlemen, peasant women, noble ladies, servants, the inhabitants of a hundred villages, all that had been swept up by the "Blues" during and after the rout. These human droves, clad in tatters and foul with two months' wallowing in the mire of Brittany under the winter rains, weakened by lack of food and dysentery—harried, fevered, half-dead with misery and broken in spirit—were penned in these gloomy edifices, where they found neither straw nor beds, nor water nor fire. The Military Commission sat continuously, making daily gaps by shootings in this heaped mass which yet grew unceasingly; for the "Blues" made good bags and continued to bring in the poor wretches, who, as though hypnotised by the sight of the Loire, beyond which lay safety, yet which they could not cross, allowed themselves to be taken by thousands all along its banks.

At the Entrepôt they waited for death. Those who drew blanks in the lottery of execution fell victims to the plague. "This dreadful visitation," writes Dr. Pariset, "carries them

off every night by hundreds. In the morning the corpses are flung from the windows and laid in heaps, which are covered with sails; then laded on to barrows which carry them to the quarries of the Gigant Suburb. I had heard a great deal," he adds, "of the filthy state of the Entrepôt, and expected to encounter a revolting stench. But as I set foot on the staircase I only experienced a faint and mild smell, which made me inclined to vomit. I went slowly through the wards; they had lost during the night more than a hundred of their miserable tenants, pale and fleshless spectres, lying or prostrate on the floors, or crawling and staggering, as if in drunkenness." [1]

Of thirty-two men on guard over them nineteen died in a few days.[2] Thomas, an officer of health at Nantes, saw in such wards as he had the courage to explore, corpses still quivering, "fallen into tubs full of ordure." On catching sight of him the women gave vent to cries of alarm, thinking he was a *noyeur*.[3] Fontaine, in charge of the stores of provisions, had also to go to the Entrepôt to carry

[1] Letter from Pariset, physician and surgeon, dated February 8, 1837. Sent in by A. Lallié.

[2] Nantes Library, 50,577. Informant, A. Lallié.

[3] *Courrier*, Brumaire 2nd, year III.

bread there. He found neither fire nor light; the darkness in that huge sepulchre was such that he could not serve out the rations. Just as he was leaving he was accosted by a little man in trousers and a red cap, who declared himself an agent of the Revolutionary Committee.

"It is I," said the unknown to Fontaine, "it is I that am intrusted with all executions; it is I that am told off to draw back the panel at the drownings, and nothing is done without my orders. If you care to come, I will give you brigands' brains to eat." [1]

At other prisons the same want of foresight and the same horrors. In one of these the surgeon, Guillaume François Laënnec,[2] had the prisoners stripped in the open air. "None the less," says he, "they bore such a savour of corpses about them that they poisoned the surrounding air." [3] In another Dr. Noël found a hundred and twenty-two living beings lying side by side, with ninety-one dead, several of whom had been thus for months.[4] The streets of the city were no longer swept. In them you

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 92, p. 367.

[2] Cousin of the famous Laënnec, after whom one of the Paris hospitals is named.

[3] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 57, p. 226.

[4] *Noël à ses concitoyens* (Rheims, Regnier's Press, 1826).

not only encountered "filth in such quantity that you could scarcely tell where to set your foot, but even the carcases of animals half eaten by worms." [1] And five hundred women and children kept captive at L'Éperonnière became so mad with hunger that they were to be met all about the country scratching up the earth like beasts and pillaging gardens.[2]

At Gigant, where the shootings were carried on, the bodies remained, interlaced and naked; no trouble was taken to bury them. Debourges, an officer in the 6th Battalion of the National Guard, saw "seventy-five corpses of women laid out along the sides of the quarry, face downwards." All of them, he declares, were between fifteen and eighteen years of age.[3] Bourdet, a blacksmith of Nantes, saw a pile of eighty that had lain three days where they fell.[4] Binèt, commanding a battalion, being sent by Boivin to force the Commissioners to inter these heaped-up bodies, himself saw "thirty women, still quite naked, who had been massacred." [5] The German soldiers employed in these shootings deemed, no doubt, that a

[1] *Noël à ses concitoyens* (Rheims, Regnier's Press, 1826).

[2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 97, p. 339. Evidence of Lenoir, sometime President of the Military Commission.

[3] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 96, p. 381.

[4] *Ibid.*, vi., No, 81, p. 322. [5] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 98, p. 401.

corpse no longer had any need of a shift, and that the same, even if in rags, could always be bartered for a glass of brandy. Hence they stripped the bodies with as little compunction as the Committee despoiled the living.

For the Committee coined money, and was fertile in resources. The idea was put abroad that if the prisons were pestiferous, it was due to the selfishness of the rich, and forthwith Chaux, Bachelier, Goullin, Perrochaud, and their cronies imposed a tax "for purifying the air."[1] Lieutaud, lieutenant-general under the late Admiralty, was assessed for this purpose at 50,000 livres, and got off by putting down 24,000. Vallée, a merchant, learning that he was down on the list of those liable, brought in 600 livres, but the secretary who received him exclaimed that it was 6000 he ought to pay. The curt remark, given in a certain tone, "I advise you to pay," was sufficient. Vallée understood, ran home, and came back with the remainder of the sum.[2] He even added 1000 "for Chaux's country house." For the latter had hit upon an ingenious plan for making the aristocrats contribute to the formation of an avenue leading to his villa. Such a road, he

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 56, p. 233.
[2] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 78, p. 312.

vowed, would be of the greatest service to all the country round.[1] Instantly folks made haste to subscribe "to Chaux's road."[2] Then the Committee taxed those who were set at liberty; since they had been confined without reason, must they not needs pay? The pretext was cost of carriage hire, and as an instance citizen Perrotin, declared not guilty, paid 1300 livres for his conveyance to Nantes, which was not a quarter of a league from his domicile. A man paid, therefore, on coming out of prison, but a good deal more on going in. Goullin had no fellow-feeling with the brothers Toinette, wealthy merchants of the city. They were arrested by order of the Committee, and a visitation was carried out at their house by Lévêque and Gallon, who had omitted to take a magistrate with them. They opened the safe and found two pocket-books in it.

"Right! That's what we were looking for," and they made off, carrying the swag with them. When Goullin was called to account for this

[1] "People spoke to me about this subscription," says Renard, the mayor, "and it seemed likely to be of some use to the commune of Nantes and to those round about" (*Bulletin*, vii., No. 2, p. 8).

[2] Lenoir, President of the Military Commission, declares: "I gave 25 livres towards Chaux's road, with the announcement that I gave the sum for the public good, and never had any receipt for it" (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 97, p. 386).

larceny his answer was, "The seizure of gold, silver, and goods carried out at the Toinettes' was a confiscation which the Committee thought would be to the benefit of the Republic." And Grandmaison added, "For my part, I thought them guilty on the strength of what I had heard said." [1]

The brothers Toinette were married and had twelve children between them. This "untiringly charitable" household was so rich and free-handed that during 1793 it had advanced 300,000 for the needy, and so highly regarded were they that, in order to save these worthy folks from the infected air of the prisons, several citizens offered themselves personally as sureties. But Grandmaison's comment was, "The sooner they die the sooner we shall have their property."

A year later the Toinettes were in utter want. The Revolution had stripped them of everything—for the sweetening of the air or for Chaux's road? None can say.[2]

The Committee had ingeniously called into being yet other resources. Its emissaries scoured the country round—on the right bank of the Loire, at any rate, for they did not venture into Vendée, not being of the warlike type—with a warrant to effect arrests, affix seals,

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 77, p. 307. [2] *Ibid.*

carry off jewellery, plate, and valuables, shut up the men at Stes. Claires and the women at the Good Shepherd, and bring back the booty to the Committee's chosen seat.[1] A certain Pinard, whom we shall meet with again later on, worked most of the time for his own hand. He had enlisted a gang of cut-throats and skimmed the countryside.

Ere long the representatives of the Committee were laden with valuables worth "vast sums."[2] This wealth was catalogued very cursorily[3] and stored in wardrobes, of which Bachelier and Goullin kept the keys. From time to time they held a sale among their friends. Their comrade Bollogniel attended to the valuations in a brotherly spirit. Bertrand, the secretary, assigned himself six small spoons, General Vimeux secured twelve covers, Bachelier chose some plate, Chaux, Grandmaison, and others equipped their households in like

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 72, p. 285. Joseph Vic, commissioned by the Committee, captain in the Nantes Legion, deposited with the Tribunal an order signed by the members of the said Committee, dated Ventôse 20th, in virtue of which he was instructed to betake himself into all the municipalities of the right bank of the Loire and there make arrests, set the seal on houses, sequestrate property, and carry off jewels and plate, take the men to Ste. Claire and the women to the Good Shepherd.

[2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 83, p. 330.

[3] Bertrand and Barras, secretaries of the Committee, kept the records (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 83, p. 330).

fashion. A sale of diamonds was even proclaimed by sound of the trumpet; but does not appear, even if it took place, to have been very productive. Who would venture to buy diamonds at Nantes in the month of Nivôse in the year II.? The sums thus realised went to swell those already set aside "for purifying the air," but the Nantais enjoyed none the better health for them.

They suffered indeed from an evil not less dreadful than pestilence or famine—terror. Outwardly the stir in the town in certain quarters had not slackened. The tricolour standard floated from every house, the cafés on the Place Graslin were filled with drinkers, and patriotic pieces or sentimental dramas were played at the theatre. But frequent volleys of firing continued to be heard from the direction of Gigant or Mauves, and in the streets around Le Bouffay one frequently met a certain only too familiar cart, every jolt of which scattered the dripping blood upon the pavements, while at night from the further end of La Fosse doleful sounds, as of a mallet beating down planks, rang out over the sleeping harbour. Yes, Nantes was in terror. Its ninety thousand inhabitants quailed at the mere thought of a man whom they scarcely knew,

whom many had never seen, and who dwelt down yonder in his lair, a house in the suburbs.

For he too was afraid. The Committee, the "Marats," the members of the Court, the syndics of the people, the soldiers, the drowners, one and all were afraid. People went and came, and moved about wearing an appearance of calm; but the panic was so great that they dreaded to speak to each other.[1] Boivin, the Commandant of the place and a brave man to boot, says,[2] "Who would have been daring enough to vent his real thoughts?"[3] Flavreau, director of the Indret foundry, declared that his men's hearts were so faint "they dared not breathe."[4] Another soldier, Binet, always carried a brace of pistols in his pocket, one to blow out the brains of the man who should come and take him by the collar, and the other wherewith to blow out his own. "A cruel apprehension," he adds, "which beset a good part of the dwellers in Nantes."[5] Nay, even Vaugeois, though he was purveyor for one of the Military Committees—Vaugeois, the terror of others—had to acknowledge some months

[1] Bachelier's *Notes*.

[2] Depositions of Renard, Mayor of Nantes (*Bulletin*, vii., No. 2, p. 6).

[3] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 99, p. 408.

[4] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 96, p. 382. [5] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 97, p. 400.

later, that "The city was a prey to the most crushing stupefaction. A man who believed himself innocent at eve was not sure to be held such on the morrow. It would be hard to depict the alarm of mothers or spouses whenever they heard in their neighbourhood the rolling of a carriage after eight in the evening. They deemed that they and their husbands were about to be torn from their hearths and plunged into dungeons." [1] When on Carrier's departure one of his successors, Dubois-Crancé, took up his abode at Little Holland, he was dismayed by the torpor that weighed down the great city, and learned that an envoy of the Convention inspired such terror and aversion in the Nantais that long afterwards they fled at his approach.[2] But Carrier was not yet gone, and for a long month more was to reign over Nantes and pursue his accursed task.

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 58, p. 230.
[2] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 59, p. 235.

CHAPTER VIII

THE NATIONAL BATHING-PLACE

WHAT was the number of the "noyades"? It is not possible to specify exactly. If by putting together the data supplied by various witnesses, the testimony of the carpenters and boatmen engaged, and the laconic confessions of the performers themselves you endeavour to identify each of their turnings-off, you would arrive at a total pretty close upon thirty. But these affidavits are for the most part very confused; they rarely fix a date, and "overlap" each other, so to speak, while certain testimony which seems to apply to separate events is in reality only a different version of one and the same.

The President of the Revolutionary Court, Phélippes-Tronjolly, certainly a good authority, fixes them at twenty-three.[1] Such a statement was certainly not put forward carelessly, and, as far as it is possible to verify it, is no great way from the truth.

The dates of some of these "submersions"

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 59, p. 236.

—such was the euphemism employed by Grandmaison—are easily enough fixed. Nevertheless, many points remain vague. Was this method of extermination in vogue before Carrier came to Nantes? It seems that a first experiment of this nature dates from about October 16th, while the Representative was still at Cholet. At that period Goullin and Chaux authorised two citizens, Magniant and Marin, to "call in such armed force as they deemed suitable for a secret raid."[1] Grandmaison himself averred that about this time the city of Nantes, "being beset by all the scourges that civil war brings in its train," had found itself grimly forced to "get rid of useless mouths." "Several submersions," he says, "were carried out, which were scarcely mentioned in the city."[2] Yet it would be risky to believe the *noyeur's* word on this point; perhaps he had an interest in adducing what in official language is called "a precedent." Carrier's phrase quoted above—"an occurrence of a novel nature"—was applied to the drowning of November 16th, and suffices to make it sure that this was the first of them all.

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 98, p. 401.

[2] *Mémoire de Grandmaison*, bearing date Nantes, Prairial, year II.; *Archives Nationales*, W, 493, quoted by Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 4.

To recapitulate, there were drowned that night the ninety priests held captve on board the galliot; there was a fresh drowning on December 9th, the victims on this occasion being the fifty-three, or fifty-eight, ecclesiastics brought from Angers. During the night of the 14th of the same month (Frimaire 25th) they drowned 129 prisoners from Le Bouffay. We have recounted the above-mentioned three expeditions merely "as a reminder." Some days later another "bathing-party" took place, with regard to which information is lacking; Carrier alone refers to it, when, in a letter to the Committee of Safety, dated Nivôse 2nd (December 22, 1793), he alludes cursorily to "the miracle wrought by the Loire, which has just swallowed up three hundred and sixty more reactionists."[1] That is all, nor does this refer to preceding outings, the number of the victims named by the Proconsul leaving no room for confusion. It is certainly remarkable that in the cloud of testimonies subsequently collected not one seems to apply to this mysterious execution.

On December 23rd (Nivôse 3rd) there was a great drowning of eight hundred prisoners, "of

[1] Aulard, *Record of the Acts of the Committee of Safety*, ix. p. 589, quoted by Lallié.

every age and sex," [1] as to which the depositions are abundant. Another drowning the next day, the 24th, with three hundred victims.[2] Drowning of two hundred more the day following, Christmas Day. It was at this time that a correspondent wrote from Nantes to the *Journal de la Montagne* this short article, which was reproduced in the *Moniteur:* "The number of brigands brought here during the last ten days is not to be reckoned. More come in every instant. The guillotine was too slow, and since it costs powder and ball to shoot them, they have hit on the plan of embarking a certain number in large boats and taking them into the middle of the river, half a league from the town, and there sinking the boat. *This performance is constantly being repeated.*" [3] And the Nantes citizen whose letters we have already quoted, adds under date January 2nd, "Many prisoners have come in, of whom they are getting gradually rid by the musket or by water." [4]

Item, drowning of four or five hundred prisoners on December 26th or 27th (Nivôse 6th

[1] Deposition of Colas Freteau, mariner (*Pièces remises*, &c. p. 89).

[2] A. Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 52.

[3] *Journal de la Montagne*, of Nivôse 13th, year III.; *Moniteur* of same date, both quoted by Lallié.

[4] *Lettres d'un bourgeois*, &c., 1793–5, sent in by M. Bonnemère to *Nouv. Rev. Rétrospe.*, 1902.

or 7th).[1] Item, a drowning on the 29th,[2] and one of four hundred on January 5, 1794.[3] Item, a drowning of three hundred on the 17th,[4] and of three hundred more on the 18th ;[5] others on the 29th, 30th, or 31st.[6] Such are the thirteen expeditions whose dates can be approximately determined. But there were a good many others less costly in victims, it is true, and which may be styled private or individual drownings. Thus Vernet the tool-maker saw four men thrown into the water in the first days of Nivôse.[7]

Julien Pichelet, after being saved a first time, was taken back in a cab to the river with four fellow-sufferers, only two of whom were killed there.[8] Goullin speaks of a drowning of twenty-four or five prisoners which cannot be confused with any of those above quoted.[9] Jacques Gauthier the cutler declares that he escorted sixteen people taken from the Entrepôt, who were flung into the river by Fouquet and Lamberty.[10] Guillaume Cruaut, seaman of the

[1] Evidence of Charpentier, jeweller (*Pièces remises*, &c.).
[2] Evidence of woman Pichot (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 98, p. 403).
[3] Affidavit of Robert the seaman (*Pièces remises*, p. 101).
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] Evidence of Jeanne Chesneau (*Pièces remises*, &c.).
[6] Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 69.
[7] *Nouvelles Politiques*, Brumaire 16th, year III.
[8] *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 103.
[9] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 89, p. 355.
[10] "I escorted sixteen persons taken from the Entrepôt, who were to be drowned by Fouquet and Lamberty. Foucaud

Durance, bears witness to a noyade "in broad daylight." [1]

Lecocq, porter of the iron-foundry, saw "blows with the sabre dealt upon men and women in their shifts, on board a galliot; and witnessed a young man take a prisoner by the leg and throw him into the water." [2] Blovesse,[3] clerk at the Assessing Office, also "in broad daylight," saw prisoners stripped, tied together, and thrown into the water. It would be idle to pile up similar testimonies—those given establish sufficiently the fact that the *noyeurs* found work to do in the intervals of the great killings, all of which were carried out at night.

If it is a matter of impossibility to state precisely the number of these "noyades," it is no less difficult to reckon up the tale of their victims. Nine thousand, say some; [4] four thousand, two thousand eight hundred, estimate others. These outside calculations are based

was on this expedition. Among the prisoners being marched to the water I recognised two men who had served under Westermann. I spoke to Fouquet, and begged him to spare them. He answered me, 'You are not a Republican, then, to interest yourself in such brigands?' I insisted, and succeeded in saving them" (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 94, p. 374).

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 85, p. 340, and No. 86, p. 341.

[2] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 85, p. 337.

[3] The editor of the *Bulletin* writes it *Besse* (vi., No. 81, p. 323).

[4] Citizeness Dumais, widow of the manager of the Entrepôt (*Bulletin*, vi., p. 268); and Moutier the blacksmith (*Bulletin*, vi. p. 319).

on evidence. True, we have a speech of Lamberty's, recorded by Martin, inspector of the Army of the West. One day, relates this witness, Lamberty, being in Carrier's rooms at Nantes, said to several generals, as he pointed to the river, "Two thousand eight hundred have gone that way already."

One of the generals asking what this announcement meant, "Ay, to be sure," rejoined Carrier; "two thousand eight hundred have visited the National Bathing-place." [1]

Obviously these remarks were uttered at the latest about January 12th, since it was at that time that the Representative left the mansion in Little Holland and retired to Ducros' house, whence the Loire could not be seen. Now, we are cognisant of several "noyades" subsequent to this date. By the end of January the number of victims had thus been increased. M. A. Lallié alone of all historians, basing his calculation on figures and deducting from the whole number of persons imprisoned at Nantes during the course of the Terror—viz. 13,293—those who were guillotined, shot, acquitted, or who died from sickness or privation and the like, is left with a "remainder" of 4860 prisoners, of whom no trace whatever can

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 79, p. 315.

be found. This, therefore, he takes to be the approximate number of the drowned. It might be less, but probably does not exceed it.

For the most part they were taken from the Entrepôt, and almost all, as we have seen, were the survivors of the great "exodus" of the Vendean army, which, after being so long victorious on the left bank of the Loire, crossed the river after the battle of Cholet, and during two months roamed from Lasal to Granville, and from Le Mans to Savenay. They were the same peasants of whom he was so terribly afraid when he first came in contact with them; now that they were beaten and disarmed he was taking his revenge, thus fulfilling Kléber's prophecy to his grenadiers, "Let the Representative pass; he'll do his killing after the victory."

Such a savage view of the rights of the conqueror is assuredly devoid of excuse, but it must be owned that the position was an awkward one. The people of Nantes saw with terror these hordes of sick folk, carrying infection and pouring into the prisons of their city. How receive these swarms of men, women, and exhausted children? On what were they to be fed, since, owing to the stress of things and general neglect, the inhabitants

themselves lacked bread? Were they to be kept at Nantes until La Vendée was fully pacified? But that pacification, constantly proclaimed to be at hand, was becoming every day less probable, for the hideous system of devastation preached by Carrier embittered the resistance of the rebels and rendered a compromise impossible. Were they to discharge this army of prisoners on to the islands along the coast? Even there the problem of their feeding would have to be solved, with the additional fear of a revolt, of which the English and the *émigrés* would hasten to take advantage in order to effect a landing. Should they scatter these wretches through Normandy or Maine? But how were they to be conveyed or watched in those turbulent districts, and what town would consent to this influx of useless mouths? Nor was it to be thought of that they should be sent to their own homes in Le Bocage or the Mauges. All that part had been laid waste, and wanting a shelter they would at once haste to swell the rebel bands of Charette or Stofflet. Thus it was that, through his own maladroitness and as if in premature chastisement of his inconsequent and merciless rule, Carrier was left with no choice but to

undertake these wholesale massacres, which, with another ruler and a little humanity and foresight, History might have been spared.

Our intention is not to narrate in their tragedy the various "noyades" of Nivôse and Pluviôse, year II. That would only mean multiplying scenes of horror similar to those already described. The narratives of those who lived through these nights of tragedy present a more novel interest, and we shall therefore reproduce some of those which seem most fertile in incident. But it will not be superfluous first of all to group together a few features common to all the "noyades," in order to facilitate the reading of these documents and to allow of their peculiar points being localised in a general ensemble, of which, nevertheless, they give but an imperfect idea.

We know the leaders of these forays. In almost all of them the share of Lamberty, Grandmaison, Foucaud, Robin, Fouquet, O'Sullivan, Jolly, and Lavaux is attested, these having as understudies certain chosen "Marats"—Durassier, Naux, Ducou, Richard, and Lucas, jointly with other satellites of hearty goodwill, hailing from none knows where, and who came to filch a shirt or a pair of shoes. Affilé the carpenter, appointed as a sort of engineer in ordinary

to this staff of bandits, made it his business to manipulate the boats and engage the boatmen necessary to handle them on the Loire.

The craft intended for the "noyades" were, it will be remembered, "sapines" or "gabares," of the nature of tenders, roughly fashioned and ordinarily used as lighters to vessels of larger tonnage between Nantes and Paimbœuf, and having no other value than that of the planks of which they were knocked together. They were taken to pieces after each trip, and their price did not exceed two or three hundred livres apiece; but they needed a certain amount of preparation before being turned to account for a "noyade."

The tradition has been preserved of vessels which gaped widely at the bottom and allowed their human cargo to slide into the river in a solid mass. This is a fable; for at first, at any rate, the immersion was effected by means of ports pierced above the water-line, and which were opened in mid-stream. However, this plan had its inconveniences, and would seem to have been improved upon, while retaining the ports, by the addition of a plug. Affilé's evidence is the clearest on this point. "Fouquet," says he, "brought me four boats *to insert plugs in them.*" "While I was at the rope-maker's *they were*

making the valve"; and later on, "*the valve opened*, and the ports were raised." [1] O'Sullivan also owns the use of "boats with plugs." [2] Grandmaison likewise vouches for it. When asked if a carpenter had not contrived "a trap designed to send the vessel to the bottom," he answered, "That is so, but I had no share in it"; [3] and Laurence the armourer declared that he saw "the trap opened on a 'sapine' crowded with prisoners, and the whole of the poor wretches sent to the bottom." If we are to believe one of the witnesses, this contrivance worked automatically by means of a maroon stowed on board the "gabare," which by its explosion opened the trap.[4]

Boats with traps were thus employed, but this contrivance was not intended merely to discharge the victims, while keeping the "gabare" afloat; it was an extra port pierced in the bottom of the vessel, and only subserving the more rapid influx of water. All the "sapines" used in the "noyades" were in reality doomed beforehand, and so little did they reckon on the opening of the trap to expel the heaped-up bodies into the river

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 80, p. 318.

[2] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 73, p. 291. [3] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 58, p. 231.

[4] Evidence of René Brejot, surveyor. "Seven or eight times I heard the dull sound of the petard, which served to open the trap of the vessel" (*ibid.*, vi., No. 70, p. 280).

that the latter were sometimes secured by ropes and iron clamps to the very bottom of the vessel itself.[1] Lighters and victims were engulfed together.

Moutier, the blacksmith, recalled that Carrier, passing one day along the quay of La Fosse, inquired where were the boats set apart for the destruction of the brigands. On being shown them he remarked, "That's very convenient."[2]

For one thing, the small amount of time spent in these preliminary manipulations made any complicated carpentering out of the question. When a drowning was fixed, Fouquet, Lamberty, and Robin went and bought one or more "sapines." These were usually supplied by Joachim Mary of Port Maillard, who undertook to bring the boats round to the Cale Chaurrand, not far from the Entrepôt, where Affilé trimmed them up. All was finished the same day, and when evening came the slayers, backed by soldiers requisitioned at the neighbouring post, proceeded to the prison. The course of events was always the same. Fouquet and Lamberty, brilliantly habited as general officers[3] and with gold epaulettes,[4] caused the doors to be opened to them, and armed with

[1] Affilé's depositions (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 80, p. 318).
[2] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 80, p. 319.
[3] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 97, p. 400. [4] *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 92.

enormous bundles of new lengths of rope paraded the warehouses and barns crowded with prisoners, binding with their own hands those of whom they made choice. Strongly tied together in couples by the wrists and arms, the victims passed down into the street, where soldiers awaited them, drawn up in line before the entrance of the Entrepôt. Orders were given for the utmost silence. It was a very long business; for when the batch was a heavy one, these preliminaries lasted from five to eleven in the evening.[1]

The doomed victims took their places docilely in file, two couples to a rank; peasants for the most part, farmers, labourers, workmen from the spinning shops at Cholet, some sick and scarcely able to stand, others still vigorous. As they had been allowed to suppose they were being merely transferred to Brest, they were not uneasy. Some even appeared content. The most wary showed their doubts of the fierce air of the whippers-in and the gloomy mien of the soldiers. All had prepared themselves for a journey, carrying with them their bread, baskets, and little bundles of belongings tied to their belts, or slung over the shoulder with string or cloth-edgings.

[1] Depositions of Charpentier, jeweller (*Pièces remises*, p. 107).

The file, watched only by some National Guards, lengthened out at the foot of the walls of the Entrepôt, those in front moving forward as others arrive, and formed up in their rear. Sometimes it extended as far as the Sanitat. These poor folks complained of nothing but their bonds. When they saw Fouquet, Lamberty, Robin, or Foucaud going round, with candles in their fingers, they begged that their bonds might be loosened, for they caused them unbearable tortures. One day young Robin, infuriated by these outcries, was seen to rush into the ranks and furiously overturn five pinioned couples, whom he battered haphazard with the flat of his sword.

The signal to start being given at length, Fouquet passed along the ranks, tightening such knots as seemed too lax, and the herd moved forward in good order. Carrier came once to witness the march past and hold a review of the grim levy; he wore a dark roquelaure and a round hat. His squeaking voice was heard commanding, "Quicken your step! March in line!" [1]

When the funereal column was almost wholly composed of women, as was the case in Nivôse when three hundred female captives were

[1] Evidence of Saturnin Depois, turner (Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 53).

drowned at one sweep, the scene was heart-breaking. These hapless beings were more suspicious than the men; for they could not, like them, be duped with the pretext of a necessary transfer for the erection of fortifications. That day, by-the-bye, the sightseers were in exceptional numbers on the road from the Entrepôt to the quayside. How did the rumour spread through the city that women were going to be the victims?[1] No one knows, but certain people were always informed in good time of the place and hour where their charity might be exercised, and came to save the children. There were indeed mothers among those who were to die; with their free arms they held their babies tightly clasped. All lamented and sobbed, and when the slayers bade them go forward, their cries of despair redoubled; they appealed to the spectators ranged along their path. "They are going to drown us," they cried, "and they will not try us!"[2]

Despite the arms held out to them in pity, many would not part with their children; others, more heroic or more loving, gave them over to strangers. One of them determinedly flung her

[1] Evidence of Colas Freteau (*Pièces remises*, &c., p. 89).

[2] Evidence of Victoire Abraham, Pichot's wife (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 71, p. 283).

little one among the crowd. At once it was caught "like a ball" by a woman who cried out to the mother "that she would take care of it."[1] A young woman of Nantes, Mlle. Dusen, sister of an officer in the National Guard, received one day a mite scarcely a year old, which had been torn by a compassionate soldier from the arms of a woman who was being led to death. She sheltered the orphan and "took it as her dowry" to Surgeon Gourlay—her betrothed?—who at once adopted it.[2] Plenty of families at Nantes, poor and rich alike, thus gave shelter to little strangers who grew up without ever knowing who were their parents.

When the procession reached the side of the Loire, facing the embarking slip, a halt was called; a gangway formed of planks laid from vessel to vessel led to the yawning lighter. The ruffians quickly searched each couple, bore off their ties and belts, turned out their pockets, and passed a hand under their shifts; then they piled up on the quay the spoil, which later on they would gather together in large baskets, to be sold next day at the harbour.[3]

"Come along, you cursed beggars, make

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 98, p. 403, and Bachelier's *Notes*.
[2] *Ibid., id.*, No. 70, p. 280.
[3] *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 26.

haste! no shirking; everybody must move on and get the business through." [1]

The prisoners were pushed on to the gangway, where a boatman stood, who in his turn snatched whatever he could clutch in passing, hats or caps, of which he made a heap in the barge. One of the soldiers having ventured on board and cast an eye on the bottom of the "gabare," already full, saw in the welter of heaped-up bodies a man whom he recognised, still despoiling them and carrying off what little his fellows had not taken.[2]

The imperfect outcome of these successive pillagings yet excited many regrets. It is not easy to take their vests and shirts from men tied in couples by the arm; Lamberty's agents thus lost an assured gain, with no benefit to any one. Out of regard for his satellites, whom he wished at once to allure and compromise, the slayer-in-chief modified his tactics. Carrier had made him a present of the Dutch galliot lately used in the first drowning, and on board of which he sometimes invited his friends to some joyous love-feast. Why should he not make use of his vessel, anchored off La Sécherie,

[1] Testimony of Laurent junior, armourer (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 87, p. 346).

[2] Charles, afterwards town major of Nantes (*Pièces remises*, p. 107).

on which these men could strip the prisoners before they were pinioned more conveniently than on the quay? It would afford him, moreover, the advantage of working in mid-stream, far from prying witnesses; the idea was put in practice from the end of December. Thus they no longer placed the wretches deported from the Entrepôt directly on board the "sapine," which was to be their tomb, but on board gunboats, whence they were taken out to the galliot, and let down to the bottom of the hold. Here they were hauled up in small groups to be stripped at leisure, and only then let down into a lighter moored alongside the vessel, which, when once filled and the hour of execution come, was warped out into mid-stream. In this fashion nothing was lost of the spoils of the "brigands," and the affair passed off secretly, a double advantage. They even improved so far on this method, when the "batch" was not large, as to dispense altogether with the lighter, compelling their victims, when duly roped, to leap from the deck of the galliot direct into the stream. Robin, O'Sullivan, and Grandmaison persuaded the refractory with sabre blows.

The narratives of these excursions, which have been styled "galliot drownings," are fairly

abundant. Further on we shall find some of these emanating either from boatmen or National Guards, who had to be called in to protect the drowners. One of these auxiliaries declares that, the night he was on duty, Lamberty's vessel had some fifty women on board; there were also children and some boys of fifteen, who were brought out of the hold one by one to be flung into the water.[1] Julien Pichelet, whose evidence will be quoted at full length, for he owed his life to a whim of Robin's, was put on board the galliot with three hundred men and fifty women. All were summoned separately into the captain's cabin, stripped, bound together, and let down in their shifts into a lighter which had put out.[2] Even this miserable rag—this shroud, more properly—excited the cupidity of the executioners, for on one of the raids, probably that of January 17th (Nivôse 28th), the seamen told off to work the craft saw at first thirty women let down wholly naked. Roused to indignation, they ventured to protest, when the remaining victims were left their shirts.[3]

Though inured to such frequent sights, these seamen were sometimes seized with pity. One

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 95, p. 380.
[2] *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 103.
[3] Evidence of Colas Freteau (*ibid.*, p. 89).

of them, Colas Freteau, seeing them throw a weeping woman into the lighter, struggling and calling for help, was bold enough to suggest to Fouquet, "Citizen, let us at least save that woman. If you agree, I will go and fetch her." Fouquet gave vent to an oath. "Are you going shares with her, b—— scoundrel?" he bawled. And flinging himself on the suppliant he split her head with a blow of his sword.[1]

Such was discipline on board. On the occasion of another "noyade," while three hundred naked prisoners, with hands tied behind their backs, were being shaken down in the lighter, "a young man, singing the Carmagnole the while"—we seem to recognise Robin—struck off the heads of two "brigands," who seemed to be no more than eighteen. Their headless trunks were flung into the water.[2] When the Loire was at low water the plan adopted was as follows: men were flung from a launch into a part of the river which was shallow, and if they succeeded in getting a footing, were shot or sabred by the slayers from boats. This carnage, which was witnessed by two Nantais, lasted an hour and a half.[3]

[1] *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 89.

[2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 85, p. 338.

[3] *Journal des Lois*, Brumaire 22nd and 26th, year III. Evidence of Fontenau and Chevalier.

At times also, whether it was that the lighters were not forthcoming or for some other reason, the condemned would remain some time on board the galliot, awaiting a propitious opportunity for execution. In this manner a volunteer of the Vendean army languished for two days with three hundred and fifty companions on a boat anchored within sight of Chézine. Did they feed these men, lying at death's door, or what did they do? On half a pound of bread a day, says a witness; but most assuredly no care was taken of them. Berthé, the boat-builder, saw "a great crowd of prisoners" taken on board the galliot from the Entrepôt; they went down into the depths of the hold and the hatches were battened. When these were opened "some days later" eighty of these unfortunates were found dead of hunger or lack of air. They picked out sixteen [1] of the survivors from among the most robust and sent them back to the Entrepôt, in order to clean their prison. When the work was done they took them back again to the galliot, which was found empty; dead and living alike had been flung into the Loire. Although the sixteen flattered themselves that they would be spared, they "made difficulties about going on board

[1] Another witness puts it as high as eighteen (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 87, p. 436).

again," narrates the witness, but next day were drowned[1] one after the other.[2]

The system of separate immersion, as well as that of wholesale treatment in a lighter, had its advantages, but also sundry drawbacks. The latter, to be sure, was the more expensive method, since the vessel went down with its cargo. Moreover, when she sank in a deep place she blocked the bed of the river, but at least she retained the corpses, so that the turn of the tide could not carry them back towards the city, which was invariably the case with bodies despatched singly or in couples. It must also be noted that the "gabare" sometimes went to pieces on a sandbank and allowed its freight to escape. This is what happened on December 13th (Nivôse 3rd), at the great whelming of the eight hundred. They had been divided between two craft, one of which sank in midstream; the other, dropping down, ran against the foreshore of the Prairie au Duc, went aground and burst open. The victims, thus released, fled, tumbling over each other, among the rushes; but naked and pinioned, they could go no farther. Fouquet and his

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 85, p. 340.

[2] The account of Laurent the armourer differs. It was not to cleanse the Entrepôt, but the vessel itself, that a respite of a day was granted these captives (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 87, p. 346).

men hastened in pursuit, and drove them back into the water with sword-thrusts.[1]

It was therefore in the great pool formed by the Loire below the Prairie au Duc, between Trentemoult and Chantenay, that the chief "noyades" took place. And this is what Carrier styled "the National Bathing-place."[2] It appears that only for one such excursion did

[1] The same incident is narrated in two different ways—one by Vailly, gunner of the pontoon *La Samaritaine*, and the other by seaman Colas Freteau. "Being on duty between eleven and midnight," says the former, "two lighters laden with people came to *at a spot called the Prairie au Duc*. There I and my comrades saw the most horrible massacre. . . . More than eight hundred persons of every age and sex were barbarously drowned or cut to pieces. I heard Fouquet and his satellites reproach some of them [*sic*] with not knowing how to deal blows with the sabre, and he showed them [*sic*] by his example how it ought to be done. As the barges did not sink quickly enough, they fired with muskets on all who were aboard: the dreadful screams of these unfortunates only inspired their slayers the more. I noticed that all the persons drowned that night had previously been stripped as bare as my hand" (*Pièces remises*, &c., p. 25). Colas Freteau, who took part in the drowning, avers that "about eight hundred persons of all ages and sexes were conveyed in two barges to a point between La Sécherie and Trentemoult; that one of the two was sunk at that spot, but as for the other, on which were some unbound sailors, they made [*sic*] the barge drop down, and *it went aground on* the Île Cheviré; that many of them escaped on to that island; that thereupon Affilé and another went and fetched the guard to finish those who were not already finished or drowned" (*Pièces remises*, &c., p. 89). These two testimonies will be found below at full length. We insert these two extracts together here because of their divergencies with regard to the spot where the massacre took place.

[2] See above, p. 193, and *Courrier* of Brumaire 12th, year III.

they take time sufficient to drop down as far as Indret. A very useless precaution for that matter; as the constant action of the flood and ebb drifted the corpses from Paimbœuf to Nantes, and flung them upon the two banks. Stranded on the sands of the foreshores, they afforded pasture to the dogs and birds of prey.[1] At Indret they gathered at Île Pivin, and on the embankments. The Commandant of the Republican Foundries caused "many women and naked men to be buried there."[2] One barge even floated down stream as far as Lavau, and came to on the sands; two hundred and twenty-six corpses were found in it,[3] "pinioned with ropes several times twisted, and which had undergone no change." They were interred five hundred ells from the village, at the foot of La Garenne Tower.[4] The riverside folk hastened to thus bury them. When the Conventional Dubois-Crancé came to The Foundries "he had before his eyes," as he protests, "the heartrending spectacle of a crowd of delvers ranged along the bank, and were doing nothing but interring heaps of corpses."[5] Testimonies

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 77, p. 307. [2] *Ibid.*, *id.*, No. 96, p. 381.
[3] Others say two hundred and sixty.
[4] Note made in 1803 by M. Guichard, then incumbent of Lavau (Briand, *Clergé de Nantes*, ii. p. 456).
[5] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 59, p. 235.

of this kind abound; those of the boatmen who plied on the river are not less eloquent. Noël, a mariner of Nantes, perceived on the bottom of the water a barge full of dead;[1] Boutel, a ship's captain, found half a score of bodies, tied together in a sunk lighter.[2] A third saw a sunk "sapine" full of drowned women; they were all naked and bound to the side of the barge—"some peasants unbound them and buried them in a great trench."[3] Berthé, the boat-builder, testifies that the sunk "gabares" were "all constructed alike, and that the year after the "drownings" several were still to be seen in the Loire."[4] One of these craft was sold as jetsom to a certain Bouvier, who, wishing to float it again, found in it the pestilent remains "of a prodigious number of bodies."[5] And many Nantais can still remember having seen, some thirty years ago, in a shed on the *Cale* of the Entrepôt, a heap of human bones, taken from an old lighter fished out of the river by the men of the Ponts et Chaussées.[6] The Loire did not cast up all its victims. People declare that one of Lamberty's

[1] *Bulletin* vi., No. 87, p. 346.
[2] *Ibid.*, vii., No. 3, p. 11.
[3] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 83, p. 330.
[4] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 85, p. 340.
[5] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 98, p. 401.
[6] Interim edition of the *Phare de la Loire*, October 29, 1900, No. 337. Information given by M. A. Lallié.

"gabares" is still sanded up somewhere towards the Île Cheviré, and that its mouldered hull occasionally shows at low tide.[1]

So here is the explanation of the notice which the municipality posted on the walls of the city, in Pluviôse of the year II., urging the inhabitants not to draw water from the river ;[2] and here, too, is the justification of a speech which Courtois of the Convention ascribes to his colleague Amar, who, hearing talk of Carrier's nautical exploits, rejoiced thereat.

"All the better," he remarked, "we shall have finer salmon out of the Loire"[3]

Before concluding this revolting inquiry, there are two questions to which we must find an answer, otherwise the reader, wearied beyond doubt by the unvarying horror of such a recital, would reproach us for leaving them unsolved. Firstly, were the drownings of children, as reported by tradition, expressly ordered? And, secondly, what are we to think as to the so-called "Republican Marriages"?

Such is the term applied to a certain re-

[1] See further on the finding of bones traceable to the drowned *L'Espérance du Peuple* of July 27, 1856.

[2] Testimony of F. J. B. Lacour, surnamed Labigne, administrator of the district (Bachelier's *Notes*, and *Bulletin*, vii., No. 3, p. 11).

[3] Ch. Vatel, *Charlotte Corday et les Girondins*, vol. i. p. xxxi., based on Courtois' papers.

finement of cruelty worthy of Sadi, with which the facetious *noyeurs* are said to have spiced their atrocities—viz. tying with the same rope a man and a woman, and leaving the couple thus mated time to taste to the full their frightful death-struggle. We know what Carrier's myrmidons were like, and certainly nothing odious could astonish us on their part. A surgeon of the district about St. Nazaire found on the banks of the Loire two bodies of different sexes bound together. When the chances of pinioning brought about such couplings, we may fancy that the slayers would not refrain from obscene comments. But there is nothing to prove that the thing was done systematically. None of those above mentioned has been able to say, "I saw it; I witnessed it."[1] Phélippes-Tronjolly, Laënnec, the physician, and Fournier, director of the military hospital, who more particularly testified to its truth, only did so by hearsay.[2] To say truth, the task was a hard one for Fouquet's and Lamberty's men, numbering, as they did, barely ten or a dozen, and but ill seconded by a few boatmen; and they had not the time to amuse themselves with such trivialities.

The fate of the children excites more interest,

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 84, p. 336.
[2] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 56, p. 224; No. 59, p. 236; No. 67, p. 267.

and deserves more attention. The Entrepôt held many of these, and, alas! after so many weeks of marching, privation, and encounters on the skirts of the Vendean army, they were in a pitiable state. The charitable folks of Nantes were touched, and—this is the one redeeming page in the record of the drownings—betook themselves in great numbers to the prison, with the intention of receiving these poor mites and removing them from infection. Certain mothers could not resign themselves to the parting. The director-general of the Nantes hospitals, Fonbonne, a friend and messmate of Carrier, tells how on one of his visits to the prison he was shown a fetid and lightless dungeon full of captives. Armed with a candle, he made his way in and rummaged among the straw, where women, living and dead, were heaped together indiscriminately. A young girl, frozen with cold and terror, was crouching against her mother. Fonbonne offered to take charge of the child, but the woman declined. "No," she said, "my daughter will die with me."

Did she know the reputation of the man?[1] Anyhow, Fonbonne thought that "out of

[1] The evil repute of Fonbonne, brutally set forth in a deposition among the *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 14, nevertheless did not prevent him from showing himself under other circumstances more happily charitable. According to Lefeuvre, he saved eight children (*Souvenirs de Nantes*, &c., p. 32).

humanity," as he pretends, he must use force. He took the young girl away, and she died a few months later.[1]

Plenty of other Nantais showed themselves less arbitrary, and their charity was more gratefully received. They vied nobly with each other in acquiring little "brigands," as, if we need remind ourselves, the patriots styled the Royalists. One hears of a poor cooper named Guérin who received on the road-side quite a little girl, offered him in desperation by a Vendean peasant woman straggling towards the Loire. Guérin brought the little girl up and married her decently later on. A boarding-school mistress, Mlle. de la Brosse, took charge of a little "brigandess" whom she found begging at her gate, and who could give no closer account of herself than that her Christian name was Clémentine. Later on she succeeded in restoring the child to her noble parents, the Du Vau de Chavagne, and she resumed her inherited rights. M. Louis Crucy, a member of one of the foremost families in the city, visited the Entrepôt one day; where, filled with pity at the sight of so much misery, he called out to the children: "Who will come with me?"

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 85, p. 337.

Twenty voices answered his call.

"Come," said he, "I will take away those that can climb on my back."

And he left the prison loaded with a veritable cluster of little Vendeans, whom he thus snatched from death.

M. Louis Lefeuvre, in his interesting *Reminiscences of Nantes*, has recorded these touching features. He does not fail to recall that his grandfather, prompted by his kind heart, came home one evening leading by the hand a little fellow torn from the marksmen of the Prairie de Mauves.

"Don't scold me," he said a little shamefacedly to his wife, "but in all conscience could I let them butcher a little innocent child like that?" [1]

As the little "brigand" was of an age to do something, they tried to give him work, but he was idle and crafty. One of his duties was to take his rescuer's children to school. Yet Mme. Lefeuvre caught him one day on the path leading to the house licking the jam from slices of bread she had herself got ready for her two little lads' lunch, while they stood by in tears. Such marks of ingratitude were doubtless by no means rare, yet the compas-

[1] Nantes, 1884.

sion of the Nantais was not thereby blunted. A rumour got abroad that regular distributions of children were being made at the Entrepôt, and that those could have them who wanted. But, alas! what a woeful spectacle was there! A merchant's wife, Elisabeth Marie Havin,[1] on visiting the prison, opened the door of a ward where lay upwards of three hundred sick little ones. The stench was so repellent that the good woman had not the heart to enter; from the doorway she told these dying creatures that she came to save them, but only six had strength enough to drag themselves towards her. Thomas, the officer of health, a worthy and high-couraged republican, declares that, sickened by the sight of children heaped up in the rotting filth of the Entrepôt, he made urgent application, "more than twenty times," to the Committee to send these innocents to a healthier confinement. It was of no avail; so he wrote to the Committee of General Safety, again without reply. At last he ventured to face Carrier and put his charitable purpose before him, but was checked by invective.

"You are a reactionary," rejoined the Representative. "Not any pity; they are vipers that must be strangled."

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 77, p. 306, where the name is spelt Hévan. Bachelier's *Notes*.

Thomas withdrew, and, unable to do more or better, proceeded to the Entrepôt, where he chose, out of four or five hundred, two lads, one of eleven and another of seventeen, whom he proposed to adopt. This act must be ascribed to December 29th (Nivôse 9th), for that was the day on which Goullin and Grandmaison, furious at finding their reserve of victims thus whittled away, issued the vile edict which ran as follows :—

"The Revolutionary Committee warns the benevolent [1] commissioners of the Seventeenth Section, as also the gatekeeper and all others placed in charge of the prisoners at the Entrepôt, to hand over to no one until further orders any child or other person whatsoever, except to such agents as come in the name of the Commissary Regulating the Navy, who will only be allowed to choose children under seventeen years of age.

"GOULLIN, GRANDMAISON.[2]

"NANTES, Nivôse 9th."

When next day Thomas, as officer of health, again visited the Entrepôt, accompanied by some friends who were eager to imitate his

[1] They called the commissioners so at Nantes.
[2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 81, p. 323.

kindly conduct, the children were no longer there; "they had all been drowned." [1]

Dumais the manager made no secret of it. "All the children have been removed," he wrote to Vaugeois, the President of the Military Commission; [2] and later on Citizeness Dumais, dwelling on the zeal displayed by Lamberty in thus sweeping away the dying little ones,

[1] Thomas' testimony is to be found in *Bulletin*, vi., No. 65, p. 260. His is not the only indication of a general slaughter of the children in the Entrepôt; indeed, on that point the witnesses are numerous. Moutier the blacksmith testifies (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 80, p. 319): "Four hundred children had been put aside to rescue them from the cruelties of the butchers. Carrier gave orders for them to be drowned, and the order was rigorously carried out. On this point he said to the Regulator (of the Navy), who had caused these young people to be lodged in Cayenne (the part of the Entrepôt where coffee coming from the colonies was bonded), previously to the order for the drowning, 'You want to save these children. You are a scoundrel; I will have you guillotined." "I have this fact," adds Moutier, "from Hévin, to whom the threats were addressed, and who shook as he told me of them." Now Hévin, or more correctly Even, vouches for and appends his signature to this evidence of Montier's (*Archives Départementales*, &c., information supplied by M. A. Lallié). Phélippes-Tronjolly avers that "more than six hundred children were given a prey to the waters." Anyhow, at the trial Goullin admitted the genuineness of this crime. "It was Fouquet and Lamberty," he said, "who incurred the guilt of these atrocities" (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 58, p. 232). And Chaux, speaking of three hundred children brought to Nantes after the battle of Savenay and interned at the Entrepôt, adds: "Lamberty and Fouquet none the less took upon themselves to remove them" (*ibid.*).

[2] Nantes Library, Dugast-Matifeux Collection. Lallié, *J. B. Carrier*, p. 167.

declared, "My child, fourteen years of age, was already bound with the others doomed to drowning. His screams and the outcry which he made for his father laid bare this infamy to us." [1]

During the winter of 1793, then, three or four hundred children were drowned at Nantes in one swoop. Whether, having no fear this time as to the docility of their victims, Fouquet and Lamberty acted alone, or whether none of the men they called in would bring himself to own complicity in such a crime, nothing happily is known as to the details of this butchery, a deed which our thoughts refuse to picture. But the Revolutionary Committee, doubtless taking into account that the charitable intervention of the people of Nantes had cheated the Loire of too large a number of small corpses, issued on January 2nd a decree ordering those who had given shelter to "young brigands" to bring them back as soon as possible to the hellish prison. By way of New Year's gift to these Vendean sucklings, the Committee restored them once more to Fouquet, Lamberty, and the plague.[2]

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 69, p. 268.

[2] On Nivôse 13th Malassis the printer struck off a lot of three hundred posters headed: "Notice to persons who have removed children from the Entrepôt." Communicated by M. A. Lallié.

Kléber was at this time in Nantes.[1] While walking about the city he caught sight, at a point where four roads met, of the Committee's poster.[2] He hastened in indignation to the Chief of the Staff, Savary, and spoke to him of what he had just read, and Savary betook himself to Carrier. The Representative was in bed, but sprang up in alarm at hearing his door open, nor did the sight of a superior officer and friend of Kléber reassure him. Learning of the measure taken by the Committee, he flew into a fury—swore, stormed, sprang from his bed, bade Goullin and his gang wait on him at once, and received them threateningly, sword in hand.

"What is the meaning," he cried, "of this notice of the Committee's regarding the Vendean children, and who authorised you to have it posted up?"

"Citizen Representative," stammered Goullin, "the Committee thought it was only anticipating your intentions. It did not conceive that it was displeasing you in the matter."

But Carrier knew that the interview would be reported by Savary to Kléber, and was

[1] He came there on December 24, 1793, and left the city January 10, 1794 (*Kléber en Vendée*, by Baguenier-Désormeaux, Introduction).

[2] Savary, *War of the Vendeans and Chouans*, iii. p. 31.

anxious to display his authority and civic courage before the "men in epaulettes," who had seen him under fire.

"If within five minutes," he ordered sternly, "the Committee has not caused a notice cancelling this one to be posted up, I will have you all guillotined."

This was a purely braggart threat which Goullin did not take seriously; the decree was not abrogated. Two days later the Committee, anxious to learn the result of its announcement, demanded from the porter of the Entrepôt a list of those "who had brought back to the said house of detention children previously liberated,"[1] and on January 9th, following up its idea, it wrote :—

"Dumais the porter will be pleased to send in as soon as may be a list of the persons who have claimed brigands from the Entrepôt, with their names, streets, and numbers, especially the address of the woman Jeanne Papin, who has been infamous enough to claim, in spite of the Committee's decree, seven women, the youngest of them being aged fifteen.

"GRANDMAISON.[2]

"NANTES, Nivôse 20th."

---

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 81, p. 323. [2] *Idem.*

This date answered to January 9th. That same day Kléber received orders to rejoin the army, and left Nantes on the next. Hence they were free of the swordsman whose tender feelings could not bear that they should kill children. Some citizens, grown submissive from terror, took back to the Entrepôt those they had sheltered, several of whom did not escape death! [1]

Many people will marvel that a city like Nantes should have endured without revolt this inexplicable and useless return to barbarism. If any lesson can be learnt from so dire a story, on which Napoleon at St. Helena would not allow his thoughts to dwell,[2] it must

[1] See in *Bulletin*, vi., No. 81, p. 322, the testimony of Bourdin, blacksmith at Nantes. "Citizen Aignes," he said, "who had been given a lad of fourteen, complied with the order of the Committee, and next day the lad was shot." The public prosecutor of the Military Commission protested against this testimony. "No children were ever sentenced to be shot." Be it so. But the drowners shot people as well. Hérisson, pork-butcher, testifies: "I had the pain of seeing my children taken away from me to be drowned. One of them tried to escape, and had succeeded in doing so, when the drowners were cruel enough to shoot the lad" (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 86, p. 342).

[2] "At Nantes nearly 6000 persons perished. . . . Carrier by his crimes brought about the revolt of La Vendée. I can understand why the Convention was so hated. . . . Let us quit this grizzly subject; nothing comparable to it for horror has been seen in history. The whole of the Committee of Public Safety deserved death" (Général Baron Gourgaud, *Ste. Hélène*, vol. ii. p. 417).

certainly be drawn from this terrible docility; ninety thousand decent people bowed their heads before half a hundred scoundrelly underlings let loose and kept agog by half a score crazed fanatics. This proportion accounts for all known tyrannies. Those who sow fear reap cowardice, even as heroism is cultivated by propagating the spirit of lofty self-denial. Now under Carrier the men of Nantes were intimidated. Renard, mayor of the city, afterwards owned it without shame.

"Doubtless," he says, "I heard speak of the drownings, like all my fellow-citizens, but we were held in check by terror. . . . People contented themselves with groaning in secret. . . . It is true the evil was known, but nobody felt either strong or brave enough to put a stop to it; that would have meant sacrificing oneself without furthering the public cause in the least." [1] And another confessed in the same strain: "People whispered to each other, 'they are going to drown,' but nobody dared resist; they tried to persuade the citizens that these excursions were accidental, but people knew what they really meant." [2]

Yes, all the inhabitants of Nantes "knew what they meant," and all kept silence.

[1] *Bulletin*, vii., No. 3, p. 10. [2] *Ibid.*, vii., No. 3, p. 11.

Magistrates, generals, burghers, and people, soldiers, rich and poor, the representatives who went about Brittany, the Committee of Safety, and the Convention as a whole preferred to believe—or affect to do so—" that these sallies were accidents," so as not to be forced to grow indignant over them. Three poor nuns only, when arrested by the " Marats " and called upon to take the oath—to them an abjuration more cruel than yielding up their lives—had the hardihood to protest in their own fashion; they offered the Committee the submission of their consciences as a redemption of its crimes.

" Kill no more, drown no more," said they, " and we will take the oath." [1]

They were taken to prison in spite of Bachelier pronouncing in favour of their being set at liberty. When some one congratulated him on his moderation, he resented it.

" Don't you know," he retorted, " that we have divided the parts between us? One does the good-hearted and the other the malevolent. I am filling that which accords best with my character."

Thus even the butchers made excuses when they did not show themselves pitiless. Such was at Nantes and elsewhere the reign of

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 78, p. 310.

Terror. Who can tell the distant echoes of such a dire conception of power, or the social responsibilities which weigh down the memory of men such as Carrier? Bidden to make liberty flourish, to be known and beloved, they cut her throat when scarcely born. And because she had among us too many apostles of like temper, her name will always instil a certain distrust into Frenchmen. Even to-day, when more than a century has elapsed, they instinctively dread the perils she connotes more keenly than they value the benefits she tenders.

CHAPTER IX

SOME TESTIMONIES

Among the documents which will here be cited the reader will find again numerous features, already turned to account in the course of the foregoing narratives. The story of the "noyades" remains so incredible that we are nevertheless bound to record the depositions of certain witnesses, chosen from among the most categorical.

They are for the most part those of men of the people, seamen or soldiers, butchers, or their victims who escaped death by a miracle, and who relate without heed to picturesque effect, as without prejudice, what their eyes beheld. Their unvarnished narratives acquire from their very simplicity an importance which more eloquent pages could not possess.

Let the reader not expect any great clearness or precision. A man describes the second or third "noyade" and calls it the first, because it was the first he witnessed, and he does not know of the others. Another mixes up dates

or events. Hence the chapters just perused, and in which we have tried to state the facts in strictly chronological order, will help to unravel those texts which are sometimes obscure and often imperfect, but which retain, in spite of their obvious omissions, that savour of the *thing experienced* for which nothing can compensate.

Affidavits of Gunner Vailly.

First Drowning.

"I, P. F. J. Vailly, gunner on the hulk called *La Samaritaine*, lying off the Sécherie at Nantes, make oath and say that in the course of Brumaire last,[1] being on board the said pontoon, about half past midnight, when I was on guard, eight civilians unknown to me came alongside the said hulk, on board of a boat. I challenged them and they replied, 'Commandant, we are coming on board.' They then came alongside, and asked permission to pass with a small 'gabare,' which, they told me, carried ninety brigands (who, I have since learned, were as many priests). I answered that my orders were not to let any vessel pass without showing me a

[1] Brumaire 26th (November 16th), date of the first drowning of priests.

superior order. On my thus answering, one of these civilians named Fouquet threatened to cut me in pieces, because, he added, he and his band had permission to pass anywhere without being stopped. I asked to see their permits; they assented, and handed me an order worded much like this and signed 'Carrier, Representative of the People.'—'Permit citizens Fouquet and Lamberty to pass everywhere as need may require with a lighter laden with brigands, without any being authorised to stop or hinder them in such conveyance.'

"Relying on the order of the Representative which Fouquet and Lamberty had just handed me, I did not think I ought to insist further; so the civilians manning the boat, and the barge containing the said persons, passed under the guns of the hulk on which I was on guard, and a quarter of an hour later I heard loud cries from the direction of the boats which had just gone away from me; and, thanks to the silence of the night, I realised fully that the cries of those I had previously heard were those of the persons confined in the 'gabareau,' who were being done to death in the cruellest manner. I roused my comrades on duty, and all who were on deck heard the same cries until the moment when all were swallowed up."

Second Drowning.[1]

"I bear witness that about a month after this first drowning, being on guard between eleven o'clock and midnight, and on the same hulk, two other lighters laden with persons came to at a spot called the Prairie au Duc; there I and my comrades witnessed the most horrid carnage that ever could be seen: more than eight hundred persons of every age and sex were barbarously drowned or cut to pieces. I heard Fouquet and his satellites tell some that they did not know how to strike with the sword, and then proceed to give an example how the thing should be done. As the barges did not sink fast enough, they fired musket shots at all on board of them: the horrible cries of these wretched victims only urged on their butchers the more.

"I would remark that all the persons drowned that night were previously stripped naked as my hand. In vain the women protested that they should at least leave them their shifts, all was refused and they perished. Their garments, their jewels, their bank-notes became the prey of these cannibals; and though you may find

[1] This was the second which Vailly saw, but the fourth in reality, viz., that of the Eight Hundred, Nivôse 3rd (December 23rd).

it hard to believe me, yet those who had thus stripped them sold these pitiful spoils next day to the highest bidder."

Third Noyade.[1]

"The savage emissaries, perceiving that two civilians had escaped from their hands, adopted different methods at this third killing. The victims of their barbarity were bound two and two by the arm, so that none of them could escape this time. All perished, all were stripped, and their belongings sold as after the previous drownings."

Fourth Noyade.

"I affirm, lastly, that a fourth drowning was carried out; that I saw it like the three others; that they pursued the same methods as in the other cases, and I reckon that more than two thousand people perished in this fashion.

"You need not be astonished that each time the lighters passed under the battery of the hulk *La Samaritaine* they were not stopped as on the first occasion, since they were always the same men who had shown me Carrier's permit who

[1] No particular feature allows of our ascertaining which were these last slayings witnessed by Vailly.

were at the head of these cannibals, my calling them to halt would only have led to the same formality being repeated, and would neither have prevented nor checked them in acts as arbitrary as they were cruel.[1]

Noyade of Le Bouffay.

(*Frimaire 24th = December* 14, 1793.)

Evidence of Jean Baptiste Tintelin,[2] in charge of military commissariat, accused before the Military Commission by the Marat Company and the Nantes Revolutionary Committee of alleged dilapidations; sentenced in the first instance, a conviction quashed by the Convention.

"At eleven in the evening Girardot, commonly called Jatton (Joson), turnkey of Le Bouffay and private in the Marat Company, caused the cells and dungeons to be opened, holding a list in one hand and a drawn sword in the other. He called over those who were to be transferred, threatening to put everybody to the sword in case of resistance.

"'Come on,' he said, 'up with you all; pack your things, no exceptions.'

"Not only the turnkey in charge of the roll,

[1] *Pièces remises*, p. 24.

[2] In *Bulletin*, vi., No. 64, p. 256, the name is written Teinglein.

but also all the men of the Marat Company, were soaked in the most revolting drunkenness; this turnkey tortured the names of all the prisoners, and when the poor wretches remarked that he summoned them by names which were not theirs, he pretended he had made a mistake, and compelled them to march whatever their title.

"Thanks to the brightness of the moon, I noticed a youth of about fifteen who was being forced to step along like the rest; in vain he claimed his belongings, as I distinctly heard. They answered that he would not need them where he was bound.

"That same evening we heard a pistol fired; the shot echoed so loudly in our ears that we all took it for a volley. I learned afterwards that it had been discharged on the steps of the Palace, at a poor wretch who declined to move. Poignant, one of our comrades, seeing himself on the point of being seized by the *noyeurs*, took refuge in the latrines, but being soon discovered by the myrmidons of the Committee, had no difficulty in justifying his presence there, even to men almost drenched with wine. He said he had gone there for a want, and was ready to go with them; they believed his word, and marched him off.

"One man of considerable strength showed a desire to offer resistance. Touching this prisoner, I heard him handed over to Durassier by a gunner, who said, 'I bring him to your special notice; 'tis a b—— that must be watched.'

"The gunner was implicitly obeyed, for I noticed that this prisoner was taken along with a pistol to his breast. They threatened to make an example of him at the first movement.

"That night was a very cruel one for me; more than a hundred times I heard my name mangled—'Titelin, Peintelin, Teintelein'—such were the various forms that rang in my ears.

"'Come,' said these specimens of drill-sergeants to each other, 'let's make haste, the tide is going out; they are at the hospital. Let us hurry,' they kept saying; 'we shall not have time to get there.'

"The night was passing away! I had had the luck to escape their search."

The witness René Naux, quartermaster of the Marat Company, testifies as follows to the events at which he was present during the night of Frimaire 24th.

A letter addressed to the Captain of the Marat

Company bade the corps proceed to the hall of the Department Buildings. It marched thither, and thence to the prison of Le Bouffay, which it reached at ten in the evening.

The witness there saw Goullin, who had a list in his hand, also Desmarets, Bercard, Mainguet, and Lafargue. Jolly and an attendant at the jail were engaged in binding twenty unfortunates, who uttered shrieks and did not know what they wanted to do to them. They were marched to a place called the Cale Robin, and the escort went back for others, which it brought to the same number as at first, or thereabouts. All the victims having gone on board a lighter, the witness took with him in the boat an order given him by Goullin to enable her to pass the Sécherie. He found Grandmaison on board; afterwards he got into a boat to carry the order to a corsair lying in the middle of the river, and then went with the victims being taken to their death.

When this human cargo reached Cheviré Point, the boat previously used by the witness was employed to carry on shore all the oarsmen from the lighter; and as soon as the vessel contained none but victims, carpenters moving in small boats hacked it open with sword-strokes, so that it sank engulfing with it the poor wretches

contained therein, without their being able to escape in any manner whatever, since the lighter was decked.

The witness declares that frightful cries were heard afar off coming from the place where the vessel was sinking, and he vows that he would fain have been far away from this detestable scene.[1]

Lechantre, merchant at Nantes, deposes that, being on duty at the central post, the Port-au-Vin, during the night of Frimaire 24th, René Naux brought him an order about two in the morning to go with twelve of his comrades; it said, to reinforce the post at Le Bouffay.

"On reaching that post I inquired on what grounds the Committee had sent for us, and was answered that it was for the transfer of prisoners. I then saw René Naux, and spoke to him by his name.

"'Blast you,' he said, 'I know my name; you must not call me by it. I am not too much at my ease here.'

"I saw that I had committed an imprudence. We escorted the last detachment of these victims as far as the guard-house of the Machine. We put them on board the lighter, where there were plenty already."[2]

[1] *Courrier*, Vendémiaire 29th, year III., p. 391.
[2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 79, p. 314.

Tabouret, sail-maker at Nantes, testifies that, being on duty at the central port, the Port-au-Vin, he proceeded to Le Bouffay, where a man of the Marat Company told him that they were going to transfer prisoners to Belle Isle. They were marched to the lighter. "They told us the prisoners were resisting; and made us force five or six on board. There was no resistance. The hatchway was closed with planks which were nailed down; the panels or ports were secured in the same way. I wanted to get out, but could not. I begged Affilé, in charge of the lighter, to put me on shore, and he answered he would do what he could. The lighter was unmoored and set in motion; I sat down. They said in a low tone, 'To the Île Cheviré.' Before reaching that point I heard frightful cries, the poor wretches shrieking 'Save us! there is yet time.' Having unbound themselves, they stretched out their hands and arms between the planks and begged for mercy. I saw Grandmaison with his sword strike off the arms of these victims. I longed to fling myself into the Loire on witnessing such horrors. Ducou, Crespin, and Maurice were on the lighter, but I did not see them deal any blow."

"Ten minutes later I heard carpenters afloat in boats strike heavy blows with axes at the

'gabare,' which then began to sink. We were not warned, and I thought myself lost. We leaped into small boats, which took us ashore. I saw Goullin on the quay. Affilé told me that they had made two small ports of 18 inches in the lighter, which were unbattened with axe-blows."

The President to Goullin: "Were you cognisant of this 'noyade'?"

Goullin: "I knew that Affilé and the carpenters were told off to carry out this execution. It was the Representative who gave me the order to obtain the 'gabare.' Grandmaison, Bolognie (Bollogniel), and I were on board to have an eye to the execution. But I did not know that a drowning was in hand."[1]

Evidence of Julien Leroi, native of Nantes, egg-merchant's manager, deposed that for two years past he had been detained at Le Bouffay, on account of a horse which was given him to sell, and which proved to have been stolen.

"At a time which I cannot fix precisely, towards eleven in the evening, armed men entered the house where I was detained, who came to call us to tell our names; they presently bade us get up and pack our bundles. They

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 79, p. 314.

then 'moored' us by pairs, our hands pinioned. I looked on it as my last hour. I protested my innocence, and that I died void of all reproach. This simplicity on my part caused Ducou and Grandmaison to vent their witticisms upon me."

"'Blasted beast,' they said, 'it's not your persons but your property we want. As for you, you are dying of hunger in this place. We are going to take you to one where you will be much better off.'

"Eighteen prisoners were tied up together; in this fashion we got out of Le Bouffay. We were afraid of being shot, and asked to serve our country. The answer was, we should be employed on the erection of a fort."

"I remember that one of the accused had an axe, but cannot point out which. We were marched to the Bois de Lamourette, then to the guard-house of the Machine. One of our party named Garnier succeeded in escaping and took refuge at the guard-house, but what happened then? On our warders counting us, there proved to be one short. We were questioned one after the other as to the escaped man; abuse, threats, ill-treatment were all tried to force us to give up the name of the fugitive and his refuge. Grandmaison, among others, hit us about the head with the butt-end of his

pistol. He it was who placed the prisoners on board the gabare, letting us down by means of ladders. Our bonds were cut to aid our getting down one by one, and as our descent was not devoid of difficulties, Grandmaison took it into his head to take us by the collar, and in that way flung us down into the lighter.

I point out to the Court that Jolly pretended to hold a little pot in his hand to persuade us we were going a voyage. He said we had a fair wind, and should be there in a little while.

But all these tricks and talk were unable to cure us of the fears we experienced. We continued none the less to make every effort to free ourselves, but no sooner had we the good luck to succeed, than they forced us with blows of the butt-end to tie ourselves up again.

"[1] With my teeth I succeeded in severing the rope which bound my hands to my fellow, and he in his turn unbound me. Our captors closed the hatchway; they foundered the lighter, cutting away the ports with axes, and we were all sucked under. I swam for two hours among corpses. Inserting my fingers between two planks, I hung on to the side. A boat came

[1] The lines between inverted commas are not in the *Bulletin*. They are taken from the report of the evidence in the *Mercure Français* of Brumaire 10th, year III.

along, and the boatman staved in the deck of the sunken lighter with a grapnel, threw me a rope, and thus I escaped death!" Since then I have always kept the rope with which I was tied.

My joy was not long-lived, for just when I thought to have got out of the hands of my butchers I fell into them again. Arrested a second time, I was taken to the Department Office, where I found the defendants Bollogniel, Lévêque, Perrochaux, Bachelier, and Jolly. As for Bachelier, he laughed when he saw me, but Jolly did not look at me with the same eyes. His head grew hot, and he gave his vote for my "being shoved back into the water" (such was his expression). I must say in his defence that Bachelier opposed this cruel course. I was almost naked: some clothes were given me by the men on guard, but my eyes were bandaged. I wanted food and refreshment; but they were refused. I was cast into a dungeon, flung into a pit full of ordure, and for three months kept without light. Half a pound of bread and half a noggin of water were all my fare. I was like a barrel full of water, I could not walk. In vain I asked for some straw to keep me from the most loathsome filth. I had to make a bed in a horrible and reeking lair, and was told it was good enough for me.

By the President: "What were the reasons for your imprisonment?"

Leroi: "I was a poor egg and poultry merchant, attending the markets. A man with whom I was ill acquainted offered to trust me with the sale of a horse; not knowing the man I was dealing with, I accepted, and the horse was sold. A few days later it became known that the horse had been stolen, so I was arrested and sentenced to four years' imprisonment."

By the President: "How many of you were there in the lighter?"

Leroi: "It carried 165 prisoners."[1]

The President: "Were you and your fellows in misfortune stripped of your money and valuables?"

Leroi: "Money, watch, silver buckles, pocket-books, all were stolen from the captives."

The President to Grandmaison and Jolly: "In what place were the prisoners despoiled?"

The Accused: "The stripping took place on the lighter."

Leroi: "I point out that Jolly hoisted a sail to make us believe we were going a voyage."[2]

[1] One hundred and twenty-eight, to be exact.

[2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 63, p. 249.

The Galliot Drownings.

Griault, sailor in the customs, testified that he was chosen keeper of a galliot, on which he lived four or five months.

"As soon as I entered on my duties Fouquet, Lamberty, and Robin brought me at least 300 women (for they were not counted out to me), with children four or five months old or even younger. Among them some were pregnant, and one gave birth on board the galliot. Several of these children were taken from their mothers by citizens who took charge of them. These hapless ones did not submit to the parting without tears of grief and despair and sad forebodings of an early death. All these victims were transferred to another boat, where they were undressed and their hands tied behind their backs. These women and children were drowned the same evening, with the exception of widow Chandenier, three or four others, and a young man.

"The said widow died on board the galliot, just as she was to be transferred elsewhere; one of the others was taken to Le Bouffay, and I don't know what became of the rest. As for the young man, I believe he also was done to death.

"At the moment when the lighter was sinking I heard these poor women, who were at no great distance from my galliot, crying: 'Scoundrels! Can you put us to death untried?' Fouquet, Lamberty, and Robin sabred them; their belongings were sold on the quay.

"This first drowning effected, Fouquet, Lamberty, and others at once brought over from the Entrepôt to my galliot some 200 male prisoners, of whom the youngest were not above fifteen or sixteen. The hatches were closed for forty-eight hours, and they afterwards threw into the river some eighty, who had been found dead. Only half a pound of bread a day was given to each of the remainder, and even so they were left two days without food. Affilé and I, at the risk of our lives, and out of sheer humanity, appealed to the citizens living near the port to obtain them some means of subsistence. But in their terror, they were all afraid of compromising themselves if they gave such succour; nevertheless, some procured us bread and soup and the like, which we carried to these unfortunates. The captain of the guard was so suspicious as to rummage in the pails full of soup. The prisoners were drowned in broad daylight."[1]

[1] *Courrier Républicain* of Brumaire 19th, year III. Griault's testimony is less complete in the *Bulletin du Tribunal Criminel Révolutionaire*, vi., No. 85, p. 340, and No. 86,

Jeanne Blanchard, of the township of Beaupréau, bears witness that, having taken refuge at Ancenis with her mother and sister during the month of Frimaire last, they were brought to Nantes a few days later; that they were all three imprisoned at the Entrepôt; that they remained there three days, and were thence transferred to a vessel moored off La Sécherie, except her twelve-year-old sister, who at that juncture was removed by a citizen, Létourneaux, of that township. Her mother and she remained a week on this vessel, and the former died there two days before the "noyade"; that a private of the guard on board, named Clément, told her that he would remove and entrust her to his wife. On the day preceding the night of the drowning she saw some persons on board who were said to be officers. Amongst others, she noticed one whom they called "Commandant," and who had heavy gold epaulettes. They made out a list of the prisoners, whom they told, "You are going to be taken to Château d'Eau by volunteers, who will rifle you. If you have any money, hand it over to us." When they took deponent's name, they asked if she had money, and

p. 341. According to a written note of M. Lallié, the sailor's name was Guillaume Cruault and not Griault.

told her to hand it over to them. During the night they made the prisoners come up on deck, and put them in a row in the flat boat. She noticed that the boatmen left some children on the vessel instead of taking them down into the flat, probably to save them, since next day she saw a boatman taking two little ones on shore.

During the night of this drowning the deponent was put aboard the flat with the others; but boatmen, strangers to her, transferred her from this flat to that of the personage whom they called their "Commandant." The prisoners on the lighter, seeing the craft was filling, besought their slayers and endeavoured to grapple the Commandant's lighter, on which that officer and his merry men dealt them heavy blows with swords and boat-hooks to prevent their taking refuge on board, as several, whose hands were not bound, would otherwise have done. When the drowning was over, she heard some of the men say: "Let us go back, we shall catch some more 'duds' with our boat-hooks." Presently she was taken on board a rather higher vessel, where she remained till the evening of the next day. The man who had promised to save her came with Fouquet, and they took her away ill, on horseback, to the house of Clément, an officer

since dead, and friend of Fouquet aforesaid, where they supped with her. She stayed about a month at the man Clément's, and was almost always ill there.

Deponent remarks that on the second vessel to which she was removed she met a citizeness named Chaudenier, who assured her they had drowned the prisoners on the second vessel at the same time, and she had had the good fortune to escape that drowning.[1]

Julien Pichelet [2] testified that four days after his arrival at Nantes they compelled a great number of prisoners, of whom he was one, to file into a little room, where their names were taken and the dates on which they had been in Vendée (he remarked he would certainly know the man again who took the names, if confronted with him). Not later than the second day he was taken with three hundred men and fifty women to a vessel below Chézine. Two days later they were forced to go down to the bottom of the hold; then brought up one by one to be stripped, only their shirts being left them, after which they were driven down into a "sapine," where they were bound together at random, men and women,

[1] *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 92.

[2] He was born at La Rouxière (La Rouxellière, Loire-Inférieure ?), and had served in the Vendean army.

their hands behind their backs. When his turn came, he was claimed by an aide named Robin of Nantes, an adherent of Lamberty. They caused him to pass into the captain's room, preventing him from looking at the others, so much so that he received a slap to make him turn his eyes away. All the wretches doomed to perish being by this time in the "sapine," the sailors with two towing ropes took her three hundred paces lower down and sank her, stunning all those who seemed to remain on the surface with blows of their oars. This operation being ended, they took the deponent back to town, where he remained quiet for some three weeks, after which time they came to take him again at Robin's, who had saved him, and where he had been ill. They took him a second time to the water, he and four others, in a carriage; one of the number was a woman, who was to be drowned with them. But the order having come to drown no one, only two had to suffer; the rest being taken back to prison, where deponent stayed about five months, at the end of which time he was set at liberty by the Representatives of the People. The witness added, moreover, that he was not the only one to be saved the first time; there were five men and eight women who escaped, and that as

the process of stripping those who were to be drowned proceeded, they kept imploring the pity of their torturers, showing them petitions, which were at once torn up, and pleading that none of them had been questioned.[1]

Noyade of Nivôse 6th or 7th.
(*December* 26 *or* 27, 1794.)

Evidence of Citizen Charpentier, jeweller, Rue de la Casserie, Nantes.

"I testify that it is to my knowledge that Citizen Sanlecq, sergeant-major of my company, came and put me under orders, Nivôse 6th or 7th, at four in the afternoon, as also a part of the company which mustered; then the word was given to march to the Entrepôt. We reached that place at five o'clock, were then made to stand in a row, while the brigands were brought out four at a time, tied together in double pairs, up to the number of four or five hundred. Then they were marched off towards the place where the Committee meant to make their graves. The time it took to form these poor wretches in column brought us to eleven in the evening. It was at this point (oh, horror, I shudder at it still!) that I witnessed the atrocities committed by Robin, Lamberty's staff-

[1] *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 102.

officer, on these poor wretches. Three different times this Robin plunged in among them, and suddenly thrust them with such violence that he knocked over half a score at a time. Being thus tied together and unable to get up, this Robin fell on them with the flat of his sword to compel them to rise. I noticed that among these hapless victims of crime were many young people of fourteen to fifteen, some of whom were bound on the breasts of their own brothers. At last, having almost mounted the accursed bark, I ventured to move forward to the edge of the quay. There I saw Charles, at that very time town major of Nantes, engaged in rifling those who were doomed to be engulfed of what little they might possess, and speaking to them thus: 'Come, b——,' and so on. I also noticed O'Sullivan practising the same cruelties, and proposing to strip the victims stark-naked, the better to profit by their spoils. The plan was not carried out." [1]

Fouquet and Lamberty [2] began by enjoining the deepest silence on those whom they had mustered to replace the guard at the Entrepôt. They were seen later to go up into the ware-

[1] *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 106.

[2] This anonymous narrative seems to apply to the same "noyade" of December 26th or 27th (Nivôse 6th or 7th).

houses and lofts which served as a prison, armed with enormous bundles of new ropes, and we soon caught sight of the first of the wretches who were being sent to their death. They were bound two and two, arm to arm and wrist to wrist. They were next ordered to take place in file, one behind the other, and this array lengthened out as fresh ones were brought down. Their state was already a torture, and it lasted five hours for those who were trussed up first. There was time enough to take a look at these hapless victims of Carrier's ferocity. Despite the apparent promptitude of the agents, the pains they took to make the pinioning such as they desired really hindered their infernal proceedings. Even the awful Fouquet was seen to inspect the ranks, adding fresh bonds or tightening such as did not bite sufficiently into the flesh of the sufferers. One of the latter was so tightly bound that a vein in his wrist burst and caused the blood to spurt out. A man of the escort, a motionless witness of these horrors, could not restrain his tears at the sight, and called out, "My God! What barbarity!" Instantly one of the savage ruffians went up to the man and said furiously, "Do your duty, dog; if you say a word I will have you into the boat presently."

STAIRCASE OF THE OLD ENTREPÔT AT NANTES.
(Present State.)

To face Page 252

The file grew continuously, and assumed such dimensions that it took up all the road from the Entrepôt to Le Sanitat, where they were to be put on board. According to the report even of one of the slayers, there were more than a thousand men to "send off" that night. There was a mixture of all kinds of victims: some worn out with privation and disease, others retaining amid the horrors of their fate the appearance of strength and health. There were merchants, farmers, labourers, and abundance of artisans from the factories at Cholet. A more awful spectacle could not present itself to the eyes, and the dimness of night rendered it more terrible. The cannibals had no other light to guide them than some candles carried in their hands, mostly without candlesticks. There was no reason to watch the prisoners; for all kept their ranks steadily, without venting any murmur, save what pain drew from them. On coming out of the Entrepôt, where they had been pinioned, we saw some voluntarily take their places in the file long after the embarkation had begun. Every time the *noyeurs* passed near they begged them to loosen their bonds, but all in vain.

Some we saw burst into tears; while others,

on the contrary, were brave enough to laugh, and cheered their fellows, assuring them that on the way they would put them more at their ease. They had been given to understand they were being sent to Château d'Eau, some leagues from Nantes, there to be set to work till they should be despatched, some to Brest and others to the frontiers, where they would be enrolled in the armies of the Republic. Many seemed very content therewith; but the greater number, alarmed by the faces of the ruffians and the mournful and mysterious look of their escort, most of whom were weeping, appeared crushed, uneasy, and aghast at the idea of death.

Poor unfortunates! They had made their arrangements for a journey, taking with them their bread, their baskets, wickered bottles, and little bundles of clothing. These were tied round them with string or strips of list. Every moment they cried out at the pain caused by the ropes, with which their wrists and arms were constricted. They begged humbly that some pity should be shown for an agony which was becoming unbearable, promising to obey without question any order that might be given. Those who fell to the ground were brought to their feet with blows from the flat of the sword.

The men of the escort, cursing the orders which had made them witness so many outrages, could only groan, and dared not say a word to the poor wretches. Carrier's frantic shouts still echoed in their ears; they seemed to see him again in the rostrum of the Club, bellowing these terrible words with all the air of a maniac: "You are a pack of cowards, I only see the lesser conspirators suffer; denounce me the greater rascals as well. No material proofs are needed, suspicion is enough."

After the cruel torture of pinioning, the prisoners had yet another to undergo; they must be rifled before going on board the boats. This was carried out by the same ruffians who had bound them. They flung themselves on the poor unfortunates with all the ferocity of butchers and the base eagerness of unbridled cupidity. They tore off their cravats and belts, rummaged in the pockets of their vests, under the armpits, in the back, in the bands of their breeches. All the produce of these hateful pilferings was thrown down on the quay, and then gathered up in large baskets.

The sight of this booty seemed to augment their fury; they heeded not the cries, the wailings, the moving entreaties of those

whom they were despoiling, but added abuse and frightful threats to the most barbarous mishandling, and continually urged them violently forward to the boats, where other ruffians awaited them to tie their hands and "berth" them.

To reach these flats they had to pass a bridge formed of two planks, laid crosswise over other boats, which lay before them in the roadstead. In the centre of this bridge stood a boatman, who, as the prisoners passed near him, tore off their caps and hats. He thus formed in his boat a fresh heap of such pickings as had escaped the voracity of the executioners in scarves.[1]

Various Drownings.

Citizen Pierre Robert, boatman, domiciled in this township, deposed in compliance with the request made by the said Committee yesterday. He declared that last winter, without being able to give exactly the dates, which he does not recall, he was compelled to utilise his boat for the carrying out of four drownings, which took place during the space of about five weeks.

[1] *L'Orateur du Peuple*, Brumaire 3rd and 6th, year III. Quoted by Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 55.

As to the first Noyade.[1] A certain Affilé came to the deponent and called on him in the name of Carrier, the Representative of the People, to moor his decked lighter over against the Chaurrand slip, where it then was, until further orders. It was then eleven in the morning. He had planks laid in the said "gabare," and at ten in the evening the man Affilé and several others brought fifty-eight persons tied together in pairs. He had them put on board the lighter, and at once gave orders to take that craft, laden as it was, to a spot near Indret. There the lighter was sunk by opening two panels contrived in her bottom by shipwrights, whom the deponent did not know, and the fifty-eight persons perished in that way. The witness, Affilé, and others saved themselves by means of two tug-boats they had taken care to bring with them, and next day he and nine men, seafarers, who had taken part in the deed, received nine livres apiece.

As to the second Noyade. About a week later they were called on as above by Fouquet and Robin to hold two large boats in readiness, and the same day, about ten in the evening, the aforesaid Fouquet, Robin, and others put

[1] Judging by the number of victims—fifty-eight—this first raid witnessed by Robert is the second massacre of priests.

on board about eight hundred persons of all ages and sexes.[1] These two boats were taken over against Chantenay, and there sunk, as at the previous drowning. The deponent and a dozen mariners who helped him received no pay.

As to the third Noyade. Eight or ten days later the same summons from Fouquet and Robin aforesaid, who made the deponent and nine other mariners take a boat alongside two Dutch ships moored off La Sécherie, where they took on board about four hundred persons of every age and sex. These were bound two and two, their hands behind their back as before, and drowned over against Chantenay. The deponent and other mariners received no money this time.

As to the fourth Noyade. The same summons from the persons specified above to take a flat boat alongside two Dutch ships about ten days after the last massacre. They put on board them about three hundred persons of either sex and all ages, and carried them like the last over against Chantenay, where they drowned them, without being paid.

Deponent records that Lamberty, Fouquet, and Robin made all these persons pass through

[1] This must be the "noyade" of Nivôse 3rd.

a small room on the poop before sending them below. He did not know what they said or did to them, and had no knowledge that they were rifled.[1]

Colas Freteau, mariner, domiciled at Nantes, testifies that last winter, on a date which he cannot fix,[2] he was called upon by a certain Mary, professing to bear an order from Fouquet, to proceed that same evening to Les Salorges and take part in a massacre, which was effected towards eleven, under the orders of Fouquet, Lamberty, Robin, Affilé, and others. About eight hundred persons of all ages and either sex, many of them Germans, were carried on two boats to a point between La Sécherie and Trentemoult. One of the two flats was sunk at that spot, while the other, on which were some seamen who were not bound, they sent down stream, where it went ashore on Île Cheviré. Many of those on board escaped on to that island, when Affilé and another went and fetched the guard to finish such as had not been done to death or drowned.

To the second drowning, which took place some days later, he was summoned by Affilé

[1] *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 101.

[2] It was Nivôse 3rd (or December 23rd), the day when the Eight Hundred were drowned.

and Robin. On this occasion they were twelve in number who were employed, Mary being one of the party. They went alongside gunboats lying off La Sécherie, and received on board some three hundred women, of whom some were pregnant, besides children, who were all drowned athwart of Île Cheviré. The deponent seeing a pregnant woman rush to the boat's side to implore assistance, said to Fouquet, "Citizen, at least let us save this woman. If you like, I will go and fetch her." Then Fouquet swore hard at me and the mariners, saying, "Are you in with her, bl——d scoundrels?" Then he dealt a blow with his sword at the woman, whose head he split open.

As to the third "noyade," which took place a few days later, he was again called on by the same to proceed with other boatmen to La Sécherie, being eight of them in all. They received from the gunboats above mentioned about two hundred men and women, whose drowning took place at the same spot as the preceding. The deponent saw no pillaging at these three massacres, though Fouquet and his adherents made each person file through the captain's cabin before going down into the flat.

As for the fourth "noyade," in which deponent also took part, it was ordered by the

same men as before, a few days later. There were about eight boatmen, and they took on board the lighter about three hundred men, women, and children, who came from the galliots aforesaid. This drowning, ordered by Fouquet and his adherents, took place at the same spot as those preceding. This time they began by passing down thirty stark-naked prisoners, but, on the strong remonstrances of the boatmen, afterwards gave them shifts, but all their other gear remained in the vessel. On the morrow, on corpses coming to sight, deponent and others were bidden by Fouquet to go and bury them, which they did, to the number of three hundred. Fouquet had promised ten livres a man for each expedition at the fourth, but on the said deponent and others going to his house to obtain what he had promised, he drew his sabre and rushed at them, on which they ran away. Deponent cites as witnesses René Audineau, François Bruneau, Louis Douffard, and Pierre Renaume, not knowing the others.

Witness avers that one day in the month of Nivôse, accompanied by a citizen, they presented themselves at citizen Carrier's, Representative of the People at Nantes, being both bearers of a petition signed by about fifty boatmen, seeking to raise the embargo which

had been laid on all the boats on the Loire at Nantes. On opening the door deponent saw two women by the fire with Carrier, one of whom was sitting, with her petticoats up to her knees. The witness having made his request to Carrier according to the petition, Carrier answered him, "I will let you know when the embargo is like to be raised." Then he rose hastily, sprang at his sabre, rushed at deponent and aimed a blow at him which took effect on the door, which deponent banged precipitately.[1]

[1] Extract from record of depositions made before the Watch Committee of Nantes (*Pièces remises*, &c., p. 88 *et seq.*).

CHAPTER X

RETRIBUTION

Discord arose on the subject of these prisoners from the Entrepôt, whence Lamberty drew the supplies for his galliot.

Three or four hundred captives remained there, whom the Bignon Military Commission held back for itself and kept under its safeguard. Lamberty and Fouquet held these captives "fit to be chucked into the water," according to Carrier's formula, so they came with their gang to the Entrepôt to take them. David Vaugeois, the Prosecutor of the Commission, learning of this traitorous encroachment, hastened to the prison, together with one of the judges named Antoine Gonchon.[1] By the time these two magistrates effected an entrance the slayers had already bound twelve or fifteen women who were on the point of becoming mothers, and half a score children between eight and fifteen.[2] Lamberty and Fouquet were hard

[1] Brother of the ardent patriot of whom V. Fournel has written the story (*Le Patriote Palloy*, p. 259 *et seq.*).

[2] *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 6.

at work, habited in their uniforms as adjutant-generals. Vaugeois had not seen them before. He went up to them and asked what they proposed doing with these women and children, to which Lamberty replied that this was no concern of anybody but himself, for he was invested with plenary powers. For that matter, he had already made many other similar expeditions, without anybody finding any objection to raise. Vaugeois rejoined sharply that in the name of Representatives Bourbotte and Prieur, to whom he owed his appointment, he demanded the immediate production of these powers. Fouquet became furious.

"No need for so many arguments," he said, "we owe no account to any man. Let them go and fetch me twenty men as escort." [1]

All speed was made and the escort appeared. Vaugeois at once mounted his tricolour ribband and displayed his token, the insignia of his dreaded functions. Fouquet on his part issued his orders, but the soldiers refused to obey. Whereupon the ruffian, aware of his disadvantage, tried to retaliate in kind.

"I will show you that I do not come here without orders, and that I have, as I said, unlimited powers."

[1] *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 6.

He drew from his pocket a paper. It was the vague order signed by Carrier, and dated Frimaire 16th.[1] Vaugeois inspected it and declared the warrant in nowise justified the removal of prisoners, and persisted in his opposition.

"All the same," growled Fouquet, "it was in virtue of this warrant that all the drownings were carried out."

The discussion ended in objurgations and the usual threats of denouncement and guillotine. Fouquet and Lamberty demanded of the Prosecutor that he should set down in writing his opposition to the orders of the Representative. He consented, and the two adjutant-generals withdrew, saying, "We are going to ask Carrier, and we shall see."

Next day—the 28th or 29th of January—Carrier sent for the Commission to his house. The judges, busy in their court at Le Bouffay, could not leave what they were hearing; but Gonchon, temporary president, who was not sitting, answered the invitation. He proceeded to the house in Bourg-fumé and was admitted to the Representative, who, foaming at the mouth as usual, sprang at him:

"So it's you, b—— b——, who dare to give

[1] See p. 92.

orders contrary to mine. Understand that if within two hours the Entrepôt is not empty, I will have you beheaded, you and the whole Commission." [1]

Gonchon, all of a tremble, went back to Le Bouffay to report to his colleagues. The sight of the raving Proconsul had so upset him that he had to go to bed, was taken with a fever, and died of fright within the week. In his delirium he saw the monster again.

"Carrier!" he kept crying. "Wretch! scoundrel! Are you gone yet? Is Carrier arrested?" [2]

So Lamberty and Fouquet were free to "empty" the Entrepôt without hindrance.[3] But none the less the fact remained that one protest had at length been raised against these wholesale sacrifices. He who first uttered it to Carrier died, it is true, of terror for his pains, but others would be less easily repressed, and the struggle was close at hand.

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 59, p. 234. See also touching this scene and the previous one, *Pièces remises à la Commission*, &c., pp. 6 and 7.

[2] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 59, p. 234, and No. 62, p. 247; *Mercure Français* of Brumaire 5th, year III., quoted by Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 68. Gonchon died February 5th, aged forty-seven. "This poor old man," says Bignon. His excuse is that he was only thirty-two himself.

[3] This was probably the last "drowning," which took place January 30th or 31st (Lallié, p. 84).

The members of the Revolutionary Committee bore a grudge against Carrier since "the business of the children." They knew, moreover, that they were threatened, Lamberty having let it be known that he had orders from the Proconsul to name a fresh Committee, and Robin declaring that the hour had come to "punish the conspirators."[1] The People's Society of Vincent la Montagne was also ill-pleased. Learning of a sure method of at last capturing Charette, it had deputed five of its members to Carrier, who, in accordance with the etiquette obtaining at the Representative's, had been flung down the staircase without being admitted to the honour of his presence.[2] The People's Society drew up a remonstrance, which a daring *sans-culotte* offered to carry to the Proconsul's. He was received indeed, but with fisticuffs.[3] This time the patriots of Vincent la Montagne ventured to show their indignation. In a petition addressed to the Convention and to the Jacobin Society in Paris they set forth their grievances against this impracticable and fantastic Representative, who had done, it was true, "much good to Nantes,"

[1] Lallie, *Le Sans-culotte Goullin*, p. 89 note.

[2] As to this incident, see *Précis de la conduite patriotique des citoyens de Nantes*, by Dugast-Matifeux.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 35.

but so misguided as to show but scanty respect to patriots.[1]

This plaint having been indited, it was all-important that it should reach the hands of those for whom it was meant; for no one was unaware that Carrier entertained no scruples about intercepting letters.[2] Two members of the Club, Samuel and Métayer, undertook accordingly to carry it to Paris, and on February 2nd left Nantes fraught with the dangerous document.[3] The matter had been carried out in secret, yet Carrier apparently got wind of it. That same evening he came to the Club, where he had not been seen for a long time, took his place on the rostrum, and held forth to this effect:

"Parcel of skunks, wretches, scoundrels, reactionaries!"[4]

This broadside being discharged, Forget, the "Grand Lama," succeeded in quieting him. The responsibility for the misunderstanding was thrown upon certain *mauvais sujets*, who

[1] *Précis de la conduite patriotique des citoyens de Nantes*, p. 37.

[2] Narrative of Marc Antoine Jullien, *National de l'Ouest*, October 7, 1839, quoted by Lallié, *Carrier*, p. 238. "Or on the morning of the 3rd," says Lallié. It is probable they had left before the sitting of the Club, at which Carrier was present, and where the kiss of peace was exchanged.

[3] "Several members knew nothing of the step" (Dugast-Matifeux, *Précis*, pp. 39–40).

[4] Letter from the younger Goupilleau to his brother (Dugast-Matifeux, *Précis*, p. 36).

sought to estrange patriots, and one artless member suggested the exchange of the "kiss of brotherhood," which ceremony put a stop to the sitting.[1] On its conclusion those members who had the day before determined on the dispatch of the condemnatory epistle to Paris, astounded at their own daring, met and held secret counsel. Its outcome was the immediate dispatch of two fresh messengers, with orders to overtake and get back the letter from them.[2] Evidently the disease of terror was spreading; the revolutionary tribunals, the people's societies, the Committee itself were all a-tremble. Now that the Entrepôt was empty and the drowners were short of "material," would they not supply the shortage elsewhere than from the prison? The hour always comes when wild beasts, never sated, devour each other.

Some days earlier there had arrived at Nantes a strange personage who played a fairly prominent part in the Revolution. He was a lad of less than nineteen, son of a Deputy in the Convention, Marc Antoine Jullien by name.[3] His father and he were intimates of Robespierre. As they were casting about for some pleasant occupation for the lad, and he had

[1] Dugast-Matifeux, *Précis*, p. 40. [2] *Idem*, p. 40.

[3] Jullien was born March 10, 1775 (Wallon, *Les représentants en mission*, Tables).

no fancy to go and swell the ranks of his country's defenders,[1] they sent him into the provinces, intrusted with a confidential mission, which consisted in keeping the Incorruptible informed as to the manner in which his Representatives behaved on tour.[2] Like other men, this precocious apostle had his ideas as to the means to be used to uplift patriotism and bring the aristocracy low. He vented sundry cameo-like maxims, which deserve to be borne in mind: "Blood is, to the shame of the nations, the milk of nascent Liberty"; "Liberty has no other bed than mattresses of corpses."[3] In his spare moments this delightful young man composed a ballet, *Les Engagements des Citoyennes*, which he hoped by the patronage of the Committee of Public Safety to have performed at all the theatres in France. Such futile employments, however, did not hinder him from corresponding with "his good friend" Robespierre, and keeping him posted in all he saw or heard among those moving about the Representatives.

[1] He had, it is true, organised with success certain battalions of volunteers in the Pyrenees Departments (A. Vivie, *Histoire de la Terreur à Bordeaux*, ii. p. 203).

[2] Officially, Jullien's duties were, as Commissary of War, and in his capacity as agent of the Committee of Public Safety, to collect information as to the state of public feeling (Dugast-Matifeux, *Précis*, p. 65).

[3] Wallon, *Les représentants*, &c., vol. i. pp. 247–248.

This Jullien, after having surveyed Normandy, passed into Brittany. At Redon he had occasion to fall foul of a bandit named Lebatteux, an agent of Carrier's, and take the part against him of Tréhouart of the Convention, whom the *noyeur* anathematised. Carrier thus nursed a serious grievance against Jullien, when that youth, with the self-assurance of his age, was rash enough to pass through Nantes.

What ensued? It is not quite certain; for Jullien has left several versions, all differing, of this incident of travel. He reached Nantes on January 30th, and that very day wrote to "his good friend" Robespierre, setting before him his ideas on the regeneration of Brittany. Did he attend the People's Society, or commit some other imprudence?

On February 1st or 2nd, at nightfall, the inn where he was staying was surrounded by soldiers; he was arrested, thrown into a carriage and taken to Carrier's. The Representative was in bed. Marc Antoine was hustled into his room, where he prudently took refuge in a corner, out of reach of sword-blows.

"So it's you," cried Carrier, "that denounce me to the Safety Committee and venture to find fault with *my work?* When a man imposes

on the people to such a degree that it is dangerous to take him off publicly, the matter can be done privily. I have you, and you shall not escape me."

Jullien declares that he put a brave face on the matter. It was needed; for the Proconsul, turning to one of his men in epaulettes, General Vimeux, who had brought the young man to him, said, "General Vimeux, you will answer to me for him. Let him be *sent away* this very night." [1]

Marc Antoine proved unsubmissive. Clasping his two hands on his panting chest, he rejoined, "I have listened to you without interrupting; listen you in your turn. I am going to die. I shall perish to-night in the gloom, but in a decade at most an account will be demanded of my blood. My father is a Deputy. We are both of us friends of Robespierre—and you yourself will perish as a vile assassin." [2]

[1] We endeavour, perhaps erroneously, to unravel from Jullien's diverse accounts a narrative that is probable. According to one of them—his evidence before the Revolutionary Tribunal—Carrier "suddenly quieted down and started a conversation on indifferent matters." In another—that published by the *National de l'Ouest* in 1839 (Dugast-Matifeux, *Précis*, p. 66, revives the tenour of this version)—Carrier drew from under his pillow Jullien's letter to Robespierre, which he had intercepted. These two accounts, as M. Lallié has pointed out, are at variance with the papers and notes of Jullien, published by M. Lockroy under the title, *On Tour in Vendée*.

[2] Dugast-Matifeux, *Precis*, p. 71.

This was not all that he said. Carrier, taken aback, suddenly pulled up short and pretended a mistake had been made as to identity. He gave vent to some horrible oaths as usual, and asked Marc Antoine to dinner the next day.[1] To wind up, an aide of the general's escorted Jullien back to his inn.

Was this the ending of the interview? It is impossible to say so with certainty, since the only man who has told the story varies it on many points in his successive depositions. The truth is that Marc Antoine was terribly frightened, and stayed not an hour longer in Nantes. He left the city with one of his friends, obtained post-horses, thanks to the commission he bore, started off immediately and made at high speed for the confines of the Department. On February 3rd he was at Angers, out of reach of the terrible *noyeur;* there he again met with Samuel and Métayer, the two "express messengers" whom the People's Society had despatched towards Paris, and without an instant's delay gave them the following letter to his father.

[1] This latter item is not recorded by Jullien. Carrier, when before the Court, confined himself to saying, in answer to Marc Antoine's evidence: "The witness was brought before me as being Jullien of Toulouse, a proscribed person. When I recognised my mistake, I asked him to dinner" (A. Lallié, *J. B. Carrier*, p. 236, note).

"ANGERS, *Pluviôse* 15*th*.

"On receipt of my letter, fly, my dear papa, I beseech you, to Robespierre with the worthy patriots of Nantes, whom I recommend to you. Their city, and France with it, need saving. The revolt of Vendée, which is taking new life, must be repressed, and Carrier, the slayer of Liberty, must be recalled. I had such important details to impart to the Committee of Safety that I was thinking for a moment of coming to Paris —the more so that I am approaching it, having been obliged to pass through Tours to proceed to Rochelle.

"The direct road is blocked, for Montaigu is retaken; but I thought I ought not to see Paris again until my mission was absolutely executed, and the bearers of my letter will give you details. To sum up, *let there not be a day's delay in recalling Carrier* and replacing him by a firm and democratic Representative, one of the Mountain, a thoroughgoing man, active, and painstaking. Read this letter to Robespierre, and read also yourself the one I am writing him. I will send further details from Tours. Write to me at once at Rochelle. Love to mamma, Auguste, &c." [1]

[1] Dugast-Matifeux, *Précis*, p. 49.

In the letter accompanying this note, and addressed to Robespierre, he denounced Carrier. "Who leads folks to believe he is ill and in the country, when he is quite well and in Nantes, and who lives away from business, in the lap of pleasure, surrounded by women and parasites—a harem and a court." "There is not an instant to be lost," he added, "if Nantes is to be saved." [1]

From Tours next day the young envoy gave his kind friend more details; he speaks of Carrier's *crimes*, nay, in passing, he drops a hint about the "noyades." "They declare," he writes, "that he has had all those who filled the prisons of Nantes indiscriminately seized and drowned in the Loire." But that is not his chief complaint. Carrier had done worse; he had bidden an insolent secretary to receive the deputations of the People's Society "with the haughtiness of an ex-minister's ex-valet." He had made terror the order of the day "against the very patriots." He had closed for three days—"an unheard-of course"—a club of the Mountain. Lastly, he allowed a host of generals, proud of their shoulder-knots and gold-embroidered collars, to bespatter with their coaches the unbreeched on foot. Here Jullien

[1] Dugast-Matifeux, *Précis*, p. 50 *et seq.*

sums up his patriotic indignation in a phrase of comic, would-be sublimity, "I saw in Nantes the old *régime*!" [1]

The envoys of the People's Society reached Paris on February 7th. Their first visit was to the father of Marc Antoine, Jullien, representative of La Drôme in the Convention. He took cognisance of the letters they brought, took them at once to the Committee of Safety, and on February 8th an order was sent off to Carrier to leave Nantes and return to Paris. According to a note unearthed among the papers of the Committee, it would appear that the *noyeur* himself had expressed a desire to relinquish his post, whereby his colleagues were enabled to put a polite construction on this recall.

PARIS, *Pluviôse 20th, year II.*

"THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC SAFETY, *to* CARRIER, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PEOPLE AT NANTES.

"You have desired to be recalled. Your manifold labours in a city but feebly patriotic and adjoining Vendée give you the right to a brief space of rest, and your colleagues will see you again with pleasure in the bosom of the National Convention. Your health has been injured by constant avocations. It is the Com-

[1] *Rapport de Courtois.* Examination of the papers found at Robespierre's.

mittee's intention to entrust you with another mission, and it is therefore necessary you should come and discuss it.—Greeting and brotherhood!"

Was this hypocrisy or approval on the part of the Committee? Clearly Carrier was not in disgrace; none of *his labours* were any longer unknown, since the envoys of the Popular Commission had spoken.[1] The Government, nevertheless, set its *satisfecit* upon them. But what needs to be borne in mind is that Carrier saw his proconsulship brought to an end, not because of the terrible slaughterings of which we have set forth a small part, but for not having been agreeable enough to a schoolboy hailing from the circle about Robespierre. The outcry of a beardless and touchy boy was listened to by the Committee, which had till then remained deliberately deaf to the agonised wailings of so many victims—butchered, shot down, massacred or drowned without trial, but who were not favoured of the Incorruptible.

Carrier received his letter of recall on February 13th, and laid it that same evening before the General Council of the Commune. He expected, he said, to leave in the night,

[1] Dugast-Matifeux, *Précis*, p. 62.

carrying with him, he felt no doubt, "the esteem and goodwill of all true Republicans." Renard the Mayor, the man who had been so afraid, gave him for the last time the embrace of brotherhood, and they parted apparently good friends. The Representative took no leave of the other authorities; yet he did not leave Nantes that same evening, but lingered there two days longer. For the last time he gathered his cronies round his table. Was it at this dinner that he uttered the speech, recorded by Goullin, "I am sorry I have been so gentle." [1]

Nevertheless, he was not without fear as to the work he left behind him. Above all, the remembrance of the Le Bouffay drowning made him uneasy, and vexed no less his accomplices in the Committee. They agreed that it would be prudent to falsify the documents a little, so as to make the affair look like an attempted transfer to Belle Isle, spoiled owing to an accident.[2] Carrier also mooted the idea that to justify the disappearance of so many victims, despatched without trial, they should insert in each of the sentences of death previously passed by the Courts and the Military Commissions half a score names of the drowned,

[1] Buchez and Roux, xxxiv. p. 181.
[2] Lallié, *J. B. Carrier*, p. 263.

which would lighten by a thousand or two the list of the "shipwrecked."[1] At this farewell repast the Proconsul was very good-natured. Goullin won from him a place for the son of his friend Gallon, who was appointed at once treasurer of the naval pensioners' fund. At the request of his friends he also signed the removal of Phélippes-Tronjolly from the presidency of the Revolutionary Tribunal; he being regarded by the Committee as a dangerous enemy, and degraded him to the duties of Public Prosecutor. They then exchanged congratulations on the good they had achieved.[2] Carrier left in the morning of the 16th, slept that night at Ancenis, and halted next day at Saumur. After a third halt at Tours he reached Paris on March 2nd, and the following day resumed his place in the Convention, where his return made no stir.

At Nantes, on the other hand, the departure of the Proconsul left a great vacuum. The drowners of the Revolutionary Committee found

[1] See on this plan, which was not carried out, *Bulletin*, vi., No. 92, p. 367, and No. 93.

[2] The younger Goupilleau penned these lines, which plainly sum up the impression which Carrier left behind him at Nantes in revolutionary circles: "I repeat, Carrier did good, in the main. The chief reproach against him is that of having been too abrupt and violent, so that he frightened even good patriots" (Dugast-Matifeux, *Précis*, p. 43).

themselves face to face with drowners on the General Staff, and the confidence between these two groups, henceforth devoid of a common master, was none of the firmest. The Committee had lost much of its "prestige"; but still retained its authority, even though the chief force at its command, the Marat Company, had been suppressed since the beginning of Nivôse.[1] It struck the first blow, and scarcely was Carrier on the road to Paris when it ordered the arrest of Lamberty, Fouquet, and Lavaux, the three "heads" of the staff. They were relegated to the Military Commission.

What was the accusation? That, no doubt, of having drowned so many victims? Not so, but that of having spared some. On this head they were indeed guilty. We must here call to mind the order of the Revolutionary Committee, dated January 9, 1794, requiring a list of persons who had received into their houses the "brigands" removed from the Entrepôt.[2] This measure was aimed at charitable people suspected of having traded on

[1] It had been replaced by a certain number of commissaries dealing with arrests, among whom we find again several of the late "Marats." The others, as we have seen, turned their zeal to account by taking part in the "noyades."

[2] See p. 223 for the text of this notice.

N.° une pareille affiche a été
affichée ce jour douze prairial

LIBERTÉ, ÉGALITÉ,

COMITÉ RÉVOLUTIONNAIRE.

AVIS.

LE Comité révolutionnaire invite ceux qui ont fait des dons ou autres dépôts à ce Comité, à venir, sous trois jours, se faire inscrire sur un registre destiné à recevoir leurs déclarations.

PETIT aîné, Président.

BOLLOGNIEL, M. GRANDMAISON, Secrétaires.

Nantes, le 13 prairial, l'an deuxieme de la République une et indivisible.

A NANTES,
De l'Imprimerie de P. F. HERAULT, Imprimeur, vis-à-vis la Bourse, numéro 11

NOTICE ISSUED BY THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE (ARCHIVES NATIONALES J. F. 4422).

To face Page 280.

the yielding pity of the gatekeeper; but perhaps still more it was meant for the families of Carrier, Fouquet, Lavaux, Lamberty, and Robin, who had assigned to themselves not children, but women.

Who does not know the astounding story of Agathe Gingreau, lady's-maid to Mme. de Lescure; brought up in the house of her noble masters, then going to the war with them, and taken prisoner in the rout of the Vendean army, the faithful Agathe was brought to Nantes and taken before "a general." That general was Lamberty.

"Are you afraid, brigandess?" he asked the pretty girl. "No, general." "Well, whenever you are, remember Lamberty."

She was confined with many others in the Entrepôt. There she saw the slayers sweep up her fellow-captives by hundreds. She was short of bread, she dreaded the plague, and shrank from having to die. She found means of sending a reminder of her name to Lamberty, who came and took her, carried her off to his galliot, and straightway behaved gallantly. Seeing the danger, Agathe made as if to throw herself into the water; Lamberty held her back and reassured her.

"Come now," he said, "you are a good girl;

I will save you."[1] He left her on the boat for a week, where she witnessed several drownings. When the week was out Lamberty took the "brigandess" to the house of his comrade, O'Sullivan, whose wife was "fair and virtuous."

The reader has maybe not forgotten the silhouette traced above of this O'Sullivan, the man with the little knife, who cut the throats of "brigands" as butchers bleed sheep. He had himself informed against and given over to the hangman his own brother, whose crime was having enlisted in the Vendean army. It must, after all, be true that the conscience, even of such a monster, is never wholly stifled; O'Sullivan became the victim of remorse, the spectre of his brother haunted him. Citizeness O'Sullivan, horrified at being tied to such a vile spouse, evinced without mercy her insuperable loathing for such a union. And to appease his wife, whom he loved, and to redeem his crimes and vauntings in her eyes, this Moloch brought her Agathe Gingreau, the Vendean woman whom Lamberty had saved.

In this man's heart—fancy Lamberty with a heart!—was being enacted a poignant drama, which we must epitomise in a few lines. Lam-

[1] We accept, on this delicate point, and without being able to verify it, Agathe's own story, as Mme. de la Rochejaquelein has chronicled it in her *Memoirs.*

berty had met in one of the prisons of Nantes, with an aristocrat, Mme. Giroust de Marcilly, whom for her proud and rare beauty, and perhaps a certain likeness to the Queen, they called in La Rochejaquelein's army "Marie Antoinette the Second." She had been taken prisoner with her husband and her maid, Françoise Gadoré; she dreaded death, and Lamberty offered her life. She accepted, and clave to him. M. de Marcilly remained in prison, the maid fell to Fouquet.

What a nightmare it must have been to this noble lady, still saturated with the memories of Versailles, to see herself united to this man of destiny, of whose exploits she was not unaware, and who came home each morning fresh from a night's *work* on his galliot, and from superintending the manœuvres of his band of murderers? For his part he adored her. His whim of the first day had been succeeded by a fiery and crushing passion, and when the notice of the Committee appeared, bidding the prisoners temporarily set free be taken back to the Entrepôt, his amorous fury knew no bounds.

He felt that he was in peril, both for having harboured Mme. de Marcilly and rescued Agathe from drowning—as to the latter, he troubled himself but little; and Robin, anxious to save

his friend, undertook to secure her disappearance. He forthwith fetched her from O'Sullivan's and took her back to the galliot, intending to stab her there and throw her body in the Loire; but catching fire in his turn, he took her to Lavaux's, the patriot with the tattooed arm, who himself was harbouring an aristocrat similarly chosen out of the Entrepôt, Mme. de Lépinay.[1]

But the Revolutionary Committee, well informed by its police, was on the watch; M. de Marcilly was executed three days before Carrier left, and his wife returned to her old place in the Entrepôt. Agathe was also arrested and put in prison. Fouquet himself was incarcerated; and for this reason, as soon as the Representative had passed the guard-house on the Paris road, the Committee, dreading the revenge of the Staff, gave orders to arrest Lamberty, Lavaux, and Robin.[2]

The last named succeeded in escaping and rejoined Carrier at Tours, his patron's influence obtaining him a lucrative post in the Army

[1] In setting forth these facts we follow, beside the *Memoirs of Mme. de la Rochejaquelein*, extracts from the register of the judgments of the Military Commission against Lamberty, Fouquet, Agathe Gingreau, and Lavaux—judgments published by Dugast-Matifeux, *Précis de la conduite patriotique*, p. 81 *et seq.*

[2] *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 112.

of the North. The other two were placed in durance at Le Bouffay. But it so happened that David Vaugeois, public prosecutor of the Military Commission, who for two months past had so gaily sent 1641 persons to be shot, now found himself a prey to scruples, when called upon to take steps against the drowners. He reckoned the affair "a very delicate one." The two defendants were plainly guilty of having saved aristocrats, but they had given so many proofs of the purest civism that Vaugeois hesitated to bring them to account. The Representative of the People who succeeded Carrier at Nantes, Prieur of the Marne, was afraid that if his predecessor's two faithful minions were thus brought to the bar, it would look like arraigning the national representation, and not merely two erring patriots.[1] Such a public course, he said, was to be deprecated, for from the beginnings of the trial many revelations touching the "noyades" would inevitably arise.

This was what Lamberty and Fouquet hoped for. From their first interrogation they made no concealment of their aquatic exploits, asserting emphatically that they had acted by order of Carrier, and they showed the paper, carefully preserved, transmitted by him on Frimaire 16th.

[1] Buchez and Roux, xxxiv. p. 156.

Vaugeois secured it, and held that such a wording was of no account; to which the accused replied that the Representative's verbal orders were even more distinct and formal.

The members of the Commission, being very awkwardly placed, wrote to Carrier to ascertain what complexion they should put on the matter. They asked, nay, requested him, in the name of justice and truth, to point out what were the instructions given by him to Lamberty—although firmly convinced, they added, that such could not have been unworthy of a Representative of the French people. The Commission pledged itself to await his explanations before deciding definitely on the fate of two rascals, who might possibly have made bad use of his name to commit crimes.[1]

Carrier sent no answer. Vaugeois went so far as to journey to Paris to question him in person. He left Nantes on March 2nd and reached Carrier's on the 7th, who asked him to lunch and gave him a taste of cheese from his home.[2] But when the guest tried to turn the conversation to Fouquet and Lamberty, he could extract nothing from his host but oaths and angry outcries. "Lamberty was the best

[1] This letter is given at full length by Dugast-Matifeux (*Précis*, p. 75 *et seq*).

[2] Buchez and Roux, xxxiv. p. 159.

patriot in Nantes. If he were put on trial, Carrier would go back to the Lower Loire and, to avenge his friend, make the heads of all the Committee and Military Commission roll in the dust." The scene ended with an attack of convulsions, which, declares Vaugeois, would have been alarming "had we been still at Nantes." He returned to the charge several days in succession, but gained no result save a letter from Carrier to his colleague Francastel, bidding him dissolve the Committee. Vaugeois took his way back to Nantes, did not find Francastel at Angers and left the letter with Garrau of the Convention, who paid no heed to it. Lamberty and Fouquet were brought to trial,[1] and it was then only that Nantes learned, by the testimony of witnesses, the exact details of a succession of hideous crimes, as yet imperfectly ascertained, and respecting which till then people had taken delight in doubting their reality.

The Military Commission passed sentence of death on the two drowners, found guilty "of having shielded anti-revolutionary women from the vengeance of the Law."[2] The woman Gingreau was condemned to be kept in prison

[1] *Précis* by Dugast Matifeux. Decision of April 14, 1794.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 91.

till the peace, as also Lavaux, to whom the judges vouchsafed his life in consideration of his exalted patriotism and the brief duration of his functions in the service of *the Staff*.[1] As for Mme. de Marcilly, "Marie Antoinette the Second," who was sentenced to death on being taken back to prison on February 13th (Pluviôse 25th), she had declared herself pregnant, and a reprieve was granted. Only a few days before Lamberty's appearance before the Military Commission she was, as an act of grace, taken from the Entrepôt and transferred to Le Bouffay, where her lover was confined. He had expressed a desire to see her and was granted that favour. What passed between this ferocious bandit and this woman whom fear had degraded? Did he strangle her that she might not outlive him? Did he know her to be desired by some libertine on the Committee? All we know is that the helpless creature's death was certified the very day that she met again at Le Bouffay the man who had loved her.[2] Five days later Lamberty and Fouquet mounted the scaffold together. The former was very courageous, shouted *Vive la République*, and yielded himself gaily to the executioner.[3]

[1] *Précis* by Dugast-Matifeux. Decision of April 14, 1794.
[2] Jean Poujoulat, *Marie Antoinette the Second.*
[3] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 83, p. 329.

Despite urgent entreaties, Carrier of Paris had made no effort to save him. He might have done so by a word, if he had taken on himself the responsibility of the deeds done during his proconsulship. But such a magnanimous course would have compromised him, and on learning the arrest of his two instruments he confined himself to cursing the Committee at Nantes for thus molesting "the best patriots in the city."

Nevertheless, he took good care not to come forward as their protector, true to his device of perpetual evasions. When Fouquet and Lamberty had been some days already guillotined, he was still unaware—or affected to be so—of their fate.

At this period—the second half of April 1794—Goullin and Chaux had been several weeks at Paris, having been sent for by the Convention touching a matter in no way connected with the story of the noyades.[1] Taking advantage of this summons to visit the capital at their leisure, they left Nantes on March 11th, in a comfortable carriage confiscated from an *émigré*, and armed for their expenses on the way with

[1] The matter was to hear what explanations they could offer on a charge preferred by the Committee at Nantes against Colonel Joznet Laviollais (or Lerviollais), recently appointed to command the troops in San Domingo.

a sum of 6000 livres, diverted from the funds assigned to "purifying the air." [1]

Goullin franked his friends, Gallan and his citoyenne and their daughter, on the journey, while he took with him two of his cronies, Chedorge and Dufresne, and a child of fourteen. To the refined Goullin it was a relaxation to escape the coarse fellowship of the "Marats," the oratorical vulgarities of the Vincent la Montagne Club, and the nauseous familiarities of the sittings of the Committee, to enjoy the varied diversions offered by the Paris Revolution, then almost at its zenith, to a man of taste. To saunter through the streets as the tumbrils passed; to witness sittings of the Convention or the Jacobins, where he could view face to face Robespierre and other noted men; to dine with Carrier; to share the delightful interrogatories of the Revolutionary Tribunal; or spend his evenings at the Mountain Theatre, where they played *The Little Savoyard*, or at the Opera Comique, which staged *Paul and Virginia*—these were to a man of such taste a delightful respite from his provincial viceroyalty. He aired his delight at the urbanity of the

[1] The accounts of this journey were not yet made up when the trial came on (*Bulletin*, vi., No. 62, p. 245).

Parisians, and owned "that he had carried revolutionary measures too far." [1]

From these two Carrier learned the execution of Fouquet and Lamberty. They had known the news for some days but hesitated to impart it to the Representative, dreading his anger; for he was always extolling the high qualities of Lamberty. He had vaunted them to the Committee of General Safety, saying there was indeed a good revolutionary, somewhat compromised maybe, but who in virtue of his patriotism should be forgiven many errors. He spoke of sending for him to Paris, vowing that the Convention ought not to leave *the talents* of such a man unrequited. He was even for fighting a duel with Goullin, who seemed to him not sufficiently enthusiastic touching the *noyeur*.[2] The end was that Chaux, unable to contain himself, betrayed the fact that Fouquet and Lamberty were no longer alive. It was one evening about nine o'clock, as they were coming out of the Jacobins. Carrier flew into a passion, flourished a stick over the heads of the two Nantais, uttered loud cries, and vowed that

[1] Regarding this trip of Goullin and Chaux's to Paris, see A. Lallié, *Le Sans-culotte Goullin*, p. 103, and *Bulletin*, vi., No. 61, p. 244; No. 62, pp. 245, 246; and No. 92, p. 367.

[2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 92, p. 367.

they should pay with their lives for such an outrage. Then they went into a café, where they met Legendre of the Convention, to whom they told the cause of their disagreement. The latter advised their hastening to the Committee of Safety for more certain information. Carrier actually went there, though he was not admitted. He went home and discharged a flood of b——s and b——ts, swearing that he would go back to Nantes and bring the place to its senses.[1]

To tell the truth, he was delighted. The removal of his chief accomplices strengthened his chances of impunity. It would be easy for him henceforth to aver that the two dead men had exceeded his instructions. He did not know that the public prosecutor of the Military Commission had filched from Lamberty the order signed by Carrier on Frimaire 16th, not only in order to deprive him of every means of defence, but also if necessary use it as a weapon against the Representative. Be that as it may, Lamberty's death was a good riddance to Carrier; his rage was fictitious, and he grew more and more at ease.

He reckoned greatly for that matter on the apparent confessions he had thought himself bound to make before the Convention on the

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 92, p. 368.

very day of his return. The war in Vendée being under discussion, and murmurs breaking out on the reading of a report on the wholesale massacres, he ascended the rostrum and allayed the scruples of his colleagues. "Let no one come here and speak of leniency towards the savage Vendeans," he cried. "Children of thirteen bear arms against us, and those still younger are spies for the brigands. Many of these little scoundrels have been tried and sentenced by the Military Commissions; then let us kill these rebels without mercy. The scheme of the Safety Committee and that of the generals is in accordance with it, and I endorse it."[1] It was by such declamations that he tried astutely to secure himself supporters, and thus implicate the whole Convention, should his administration be inquired into. What was there for him to fear? He had been well received by his colleagues, who assuredly were ignorant of nothing that had happened at Nantes; he was listened to in the Assembly, courted at the Jacobins, and for that matter, was he not sure of being supported and defended in case of attack by so many of his fellows — Fouché, Collot d'Herbois, Lebon, Mainguet, and others, whose apostleship in the provinces was scarcely outdone by his own?

[1] *Moniteur*, Ventôse 5th, year II.

He therefore lived tranquilly in his modest lodging in the Rue d'Argenteuil;[1] five weeks after he returned to Paris his mistress, citizeness Lenormand, came and rejoined him there. They had got rid of the husband by appointing him an officer of health to the Army of the North.[2]

Though he simulated indifference, Carrier attentively followed the vicissitudes of the struggle in progress at Nantes between his former henchmen. The elimination of Lamberty and Fouquet had clenched the victory of the Committee over the "Staff"; but Goullin and Bachelier had still one enemy to lay low, Phélippes-Tronjolly. Seizing the occasion of the arrival at Nantes of Bourbotte of the Convention, the Committee denounced Phélippes to him, but was guilty of the ill-advised *laches* of not signing the information.

Bourbotte, being but ill-versed in local antipathies and inclined at first to take the Committee seriously, wondered at such conduct, and on May 29th sent back this anonymous accusation to those who had launched it. So cowardly were its members that this simple and silent reproof sufficed to dumbfound the Committee, which met on the 30th for the last

[1] Archives of the Seine, *Fonds des Domaines*, No. 177.
[2] A. Lallié, *Le Sans-culotte Goullin*, p. 122.

time as a body. Phélippes, conscious of his advantage, divulged next day, the 31st, that the members of the Committee had diverted to their own use, without accounting to the nation therefor, wines, firewood, and other goods taken from the houses of *émigrés* or prisoners which had been pillaged, and called for a complete list of the articles thus fraudulently obtained.

In Nantes there was one cry of joy; the inhabitants regained confidence. Bourbotte and his colleague Bô, showed themselves lenient and ready to listen to complaints. The prisons opened their doors, the Terrorists drooped their ears, and a general sigh of relief greeted the discomfiture of this Committee—so notorious for its many exactions, its folly, insolence, and cruelty. The public joy grew more intense as men learned that the members had been forced to own themselves equally unable to point out either the names of those citizens they had stripped, under pretext of purifying the air, or the amount of the sums thus raised. These lofty patriots, who had sworn in such solemn fashion "to maintain the safety of person and property, and never to be influenced by personal interest," were themselves unaware of the sum of their own pillagings. So deadly was their fear that they had no choice but to post a notice, calling on all those whom they had

robbed to record their names on a register. They hoped in this way to obtain from those who came forward an admission that they had of their own entire goodwill brought their money to them.[1] One can imagine the hootings and sarcasms elicited by this pitiful device. In vain Goullin tried to make head against them. He published an unintelligible list of articles of gold and silver sent by the Committee to the Mint, and proved that there had been paid into the hands of the Receiver of the District 16,974 livres in cash and 56,863 in bills. But at the same time he made ready to leave his colleagues in the lurch and quit the scene. Already he had furnished himself with a pass to Paris, where a position awaited him on the Commission of Agriculture and Arts.[2] But Bourbotte and Bô did not leave him time to flee. On June 6th they demanded that, within twenty-four hours, there be placed in their hands an exact and detailed account of all the deposits taken in charge by the Committee, as also a certified copy of Carrier's orders, on the strength of which the general drowning of Vendeans taken with arms in their hands had been carried out.[3]

The late Committee, thunderstruck, made no

[1] *Archives Nationales*, F 7, 4422. [2] *Ibid.*, *id.*

[3] Bô and Bourbotte's decree (*Archs. Departs.*; A. Lallié, *Goullin*, p. 125).

reply, and six days later the order was given forthwith to place under arrest Goullin, Bachelier, Chaux, Grandmaison, and their cronies. To hold an even balance, they imprisoned with them at Le Bouffay Phélippes-Tronjolly, their implacable opponent, until such time as the Paris Tribunal should decide between the accused and their accuser.

The latter put a bold face on the matter. Perhaps all the while there was an understanding between him and the Government, for scarcely was he locked up than he addressed to the Committee this brief missive:—

"NANTES, *Prairial 25th, year II.*

"CITIZEN REPRESENTATIVES,—I am in prison, but I fear nothing, as I rely on my innocence. —PHÉLIPPES.

"As I exercise the function of Public Prosecutor, I claim to be brought before you."[1]

On their part, the members of the Revolutionary Committee received a formal summons from the same Committee of Safety to account for the use of all sums arbitrarily levied during the seven months lately past.[2] But

[1] *Archives Nationales*, F 7, 4422.

[2] "You are accused of having caused to be sold many articles of value, of having raised unwonted taxes, received sums voluntarily paid in, and others exacted at your pleasure.

the wretches were no longer in a state to furnish accounts; they were weeping and quaking for fear. In that very Le Bouffay, whither he had come one evening in Frimaire to furnish forth his "bathing party," Grandmaison, now a prisoner, was weeping; and when the doorkeeper, Laquèze, to whom he confided his fears, asked him, "Had you no orders from Carrier?"

"To tell the truth," he replied, "Carrier gave us orders to take the prisoners on board the lighters, but not to drown them."

Except Goullin, the others were not a whit bolder in their bearing, although in dithyrambic strains they protested their innocence, tenderness of heart, and love for their fellow-natives of Nantes, "who had witnessed their doings and the benefits they conferred." [1]

But things looked far worse when they were sent off to Paris, whither Phélippes had preceded them.[2] They left Le Bouffay escorted by gendarmes, during the night of Thermidor 6th (July 25, 1794). On the 10th they reached Chartres, whence Goullin—his "imperturba-

The Committee of Public Safety bids you render without delay an exact and detailed account of all sums resulting from such sales, and the employment you made of the same." This minute is signed by Elie Lacoste, Amar, Louis du Bas-Rhin, Dubarran, and Vouland (*Archives Nationales*, F 7, 4422).

[1] See below, Goullin's letter, dated from Chartres.

[2] He left Nantes on Messidor 4th. A letter from him is

bility" being by this time on the wane—forwarded a petition to the Committee of Safety, which, haughty in form alone, revealed in every line his hatred, rancour, and pride, the dread of prison and of the scaffold.[1] The same

preserved dated from Connerré (Sarthe), which gives some account of his journey.

"CONNERRÉ, *Messidor 8th, on the far side of Le Mans.*

"FRATERNITY, LIBERTY.

"Phélippes, judge of the District Court of Nantes, to the Citizens forming the Committee of Safety of the National Convention at Paris.

"CITIZEN REPRESENTATIVES,—After enduring much fatigue, after sleeping in prison after prison and cell after cell, without receiving either money or bread or rations, and after having been bound with ropes, I have reached this place, where I am treated with more leniency, though given neither rations nor provisions. In five days' time I shall be in the Paris prisons. Allow me, Citizen Representatives, to recall myself to your remembrance. Rest fully assured that I had no object in acting as I have done than to save a fellow-citizen from tyranny, to prevent the squandering of public resources, and to save the Republic by defeating the plans of traitors.—Greeting!

(Sgd.) "PHÉLIPPES."

Archives Nationales, F 7, 4422.

[1] "CHARTRES, *Thermidor 10th, year II. of the Republican Era.*

"LIBERTY, JUSTICE, OR DEATH.

"To the Representatives of the People, forming the Committee of Safety of the National Convention.

"Goullin, member of the Revolutionary Committee, suspended, disgraced, and unjustly cast into prison.

"REPRESENTATIVES OF A FREE PEOPLE,—After forty-two days of incarceration, of which twenty-five were spent in solitary

day the drowners were to reach Paris. As they drew up at the Versailles stage, they learned the news of Robespierre's fall. "Oh heaven! Is it possible?" cried Goullin desperately.

Chaux tore his hair and wept. Grandmaison, at his wits' end, kept crying, "Robes-

confinement, having been a prey all that time to every form of anguish and a target for every humiliation, the hapless sport of every false report and calumny. Suddenly, in the middle of the night, without warning, or permission to obtain either help or garments at our dwellings, or even to make request for the same in writing, my colleagues and I were dragged by official order from the city which had witnessed our doings and our benefits, and brought almost naked before the Revolutionary Tribunal. And incredible though it may seem, we are still ignorant of any of the reasons which brought on us such severities. Lastly, to crown their barbarity, and at the very time of our leaving, the wives of my colleagues were also placed under arrest to prevent their making public the vile devices of our persecutors.

"Representatives, a party sprung from the slime of Federalism is raising its head at Nantes. Already this sect, a vile rabble of rich egotists and exciters of pity, dominates and triumphs. Moderatism lifts high its head. Even the most suspect find apologists, and are set free, while the most determined patriots are put to silence. To manifest energy would be accounted a crime. In a word, consternation is at its height. Legislators, if you do not hasten to their aid and ours, if you do not take us under your revolutionary ægis, there is an end of all public spirit at Nantes, an end of unbending and pure republicans, such as have not feared to incur all hatreds and brave all dangers to secure the safety of their city and country.

"Representatives, we claim of you a favour which the law of the 5th inst. seems to insure us. Decree that, before being imprisoned at Paris, we be brought before your Committee, or that of Public Safety. There we shall furnish precious information; there we swear to unveil the plans of

pierre is our champion; if he has fallen we are ruined." [1]

They entered Paris that evening. Goullin, Chaux, Bachelier, Naux, Jolly, Perrochaud, Durassier, Gallon, and Batallier were put in durance at the Conciergerie; Grandmaison and Bollogniel were sent to the Le Plessis Prison.[2]

Robespierre had died that day, and his fall brought to thousands of innocent people, in prison and awaiting the scaffold, a joy not less than was the disappointment it inspired in the

this impious faction, which has sworn our ruin and that of Liberty.

"Legislators, be pleased to ascertain from your colleagues —Ruelle, Tureau, Merlin, Rewbell, Francastel, Hentz, and others, to whom I am known—my principles, my behaviour, my moral code, and I venture to hope that, after their account, you will not mistake me for one of these patriots of a day, a stuccoed republican, who tries to steal a march on your creed. Already, on your advice and on the favourable testimony you bore as to myself, the Commission of Agriculture and of Arts had chosen me for a mission of the highest importance; but malevolence stepped in to hinder, and by robbing me of liberty deprives me of the happiness of again serving my country.—Greeting, Brotherhood, Support.—GOULLIN."

"*Nota.*—Could a house of detention, reserved for scoundrels and conspirators, become the refuge of staunch patriots, of out-and-out republicans? If, casting a lenient glance on our hapless situation, you should specify some other house where we could stay under arrest, with sentries watching us, you would give us back to life until such time as national justice restores us to honour" (*Archives Nationales*, F 7, 4422).

[1] Comte Fleury, *Carrier à Nantes*, p. 286.

[2] *Archives Nationales*, F 7, 4422.

Terrorists of Nantes and elsewhere. This fact alone is enough to characterise the event. That Robespierre would have taken up, as Grandmaison hoped, the defence of Carrier's fellow-culprits is of all things least certain, but it is clear that they regarded him as their champion, and that, with him, there was an end of the hideous policy they had carried into practice.

Carrier, too, understood how great was his loss. For all that, anxious to pay his court to the victorious party, he affected great delight. He was seen on Thermidor 10th, following with radiant face the tumbril which carried the Incorruptible and his friends to the guillotine. He inveighed against the vanquished, who only the day before had been his gods, and in such wise as to draw attention shouted, "Death to the tyrants!" [1] Next day from the rostrum of the Convention he endeavoured very adroitly to pose as a victim of the fallen order, averring that Marc Jullien had denounced him to Robespierre and inscribed his name on a list for proscription. No doubt he would have succeeded that day in causing the young Commissioner against whom he bore such malice to lose his head, had not Jullien, the father, who was present at the sitting, implored the

[1] Buchez and Roux, xxxiv. p. 96.

clemency of the Assembly by representing his son as an irresponsible child, who ought to be forgiven a false move. Some one, seized with pity, gave the debate another turn, and Marc was saved. But Carrier, by a daring change of front, had succeeded in taking his place among the Thermidorians and thought he had thus won safety for himself.

Of his intrigues during the weeks which followed, his tergiversations and astute baseness, history has already written;[1] and for that matter it is no part of our subject. A few pages will suffice to conclude the picture of the "noyades," by narrating the end of those who planned and carried them out. Carrier affected to be at his ease, but he was by no means free from fear. The honest men in the Convention, now that they could venture to show the repulsion so long disguised, turned away from him. Men were no longer afraid to speak, and from all quarters of France there arose a tornado of curses against the Terrorists. Paris had hitherto been ignorant of the delinquencies from which the provinces suffered, and the revelations now made rendered its indignation acute. Carrier, it is true, was not yet numbered among the worst culprits, for

[1] Lallié, *J. B. Carrier*, 1 vol., 8vo (Perrin); Comte Fleury, *Les Grands Terroristes, Carrier à Nantes*, published by Plon.

whether it was that no one had the courage to denounce the hecatombs of Nantes, or that all agreed in thinking them a shame too deep for the Revolution to efface, it appears that, by tacit agreement, men declined to unveil this execrable climax of the great drama. And by this damning silence Carrier continued to profit.

Nevertheless, the storm gathered in a quarter of the horizon whence he did not expect it. Sundry victims, miraculously escaped from his severities, were by a poetic justice about to avenge their slaughtered comrades, and to launch upon his head the bolt which had too long tarried. We have already mentioned the 132 notables of Nantes whom, at the end of November 1793, Carrier despatched to Paris, that they might appear before the Revolutionary Tribunal. He greatly hoped, be it said, that their journey would be cut short, and that these unfortunates, shot or drowned by the way, would get no farther than Angers or Les Ponts de Cé.[1] Nevertheless, they had reached Paris, and been distributed

[1] Although Carrier denied it when interrogated at his trial, he gave utterance to this hope at a supper at Ancenis. "You saw the hundred and thirty odd pass, men of Nantes whom I was sending to Paris; but they were not fated to get there. I wrote to Francastel to drown them there or at Ponts de Cé, but the bl——d b——r had not the pluck to do it" (Letter from citizen Chevreau, one of the guests at the supper, *Pièces remises*, &c., p. 20; see also Lallié, *Les Cent Trente-deux Nantais*).

among various prisons, where they were purposely forgotten by Fouquier-Tinville, who dreaded no less the acquittal than the wholesale condemnation of so numerous a batch. After eight months of unceasing torments, their hopes had been restored by Thermidor 9th. Meanwhile the fatigues of the journey, privations, and sickness reduced their number to ninety-four. In their anxiety to enlighten public opinion they published a narrative of their sufferings, compiled by one of their party named Villenave, and the pamphlet, being circulated broadcast, produced a great effect.

Phélippes-Tronjolly, on his part, did not remain inert. In three successive statements, indited in his prison, he brought to light the monstrous outrages he had witnessed during Carrier's proconsulship. The latter, meanwhile, affected an unmoved calm.

"Those," he declared, "are jokes, trifles which do not deserve to be taken notice of."

But Paris, though it made no doubt that it had nothing more to wonder at, felt a qualm of loathing. In a few days the name of Carrier became notorious; hawkers bawled it in the streets, and the cry for retribution became general.[1]

And perchance in this unbroken unison of malediction against one man, without a voice

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 60, p. 237.

being raised in his defence, there was indeed something unexampled in the whole story of our revolutions.

The greatest political criminals have usually found partisans and apologists, but not a soul attempted even to exculpate this man, and the chorus of execration did but augment as the arguments began in the trial of the ninety-four men of Nantes, at length cited before a "regenerate" Revolutionary Tribunal.[1]

Phélippes-Tronjolly had been placed side by side with them; where he stood in the singular position of a defendant, who by his revelations crushed those who were to bear witness against him. Fresh from their prison came Goullin, Bachelier, and Chaux, indeed the whole crestfallen, harassed, and stuttering Committee, to bear testimony of what they knew. From the first sitting on September 8, 1794, the vague charge of "federalism" brought against the ninety-four neither moved nor interested any one, for their acquittal was certain. That which excited men was to watch these witnesses follow each other at the bar, men whose names, unknown but yesterday, were now bandied about and taxed with so many crimes. The defendant Phélippes cross-examined them; Dobsent the President plied them with ques-

[1] Aulard, *Paris pendant la Réaction Thermidorienne*, i. p. 192.

tions. A word as yet new in revolutionary jargon recurred every moment, drawing from the crowded spectators murmurs of terror, "And the 'noyades'?"

Goullin confessed to them; but the Committee "had taken no part in them; it only carried out the orders of Carrier."

"Carrier! Carrier!" echoed the crowd. There's the great offender; they want to see him—they call him. He appears, being summoned as a witness likewise. In very gentle tones he gives evidence, declaring the while that "he does not know much." The Revolutionary Committee was "his beacon, his compass." Personally, he knew not who were patriots and who were reactionaries in Nantes; he had to trust to reports. "Besides," he averred brazenly, "I took but little share in the policing of Nantes; I was only there in passing, being first at Rennes and later with the army. My principal task was to watch over and see to the victualling of our troops, and for six months I supplied 200,000 men there without its costing the State a halfpenny. Hence I have little information to offer in the matter. I know little or nothing of the accused."

He thought to wriggle out by this evasive cajolery, when suddenly Phélippes sprang to his feet.

"I must be changed, indeed, for the Representative not to recognise me."

Carrier simulated astonishment. "I did not think you were here."

Forthwith a duel began between these two men, animated by an ancient hatred. As though still seated in his presidential arm-chair, Phélippes charged the witness with the drownings and wholesale executions, the demolitions, thefts, and pillagings, the laying waste of Nantes with famine and disorder, with the butchering of women and children.

Carrier vowed that he had borne no share in these atrocities; nor had he "the slightest idea of such barbarous doings." Had he known, he would have prevented their happening. Sickened by such cowardly hypocrisy, Phélippes contemptuously abandoned his opponent.

"Despite the obstinacy and determination of the witness to deny any share, direct or indirect, in the inhuman acts and scenes of bloodshed which were enacted under his eyes, I adhere none the less to my version." [1]

Dobsent the President did not press the matter, and Carrier left the bar. Being a member of the National Convention, his

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., *passim*, and Campardon, *Le Tribunal Révolutionnaire de Paris*, ii. p. 21.

person was sacrosanct; but from that time the opinion of the judges was fixed. The President summed up the situation in one phrase: "Let us go on with the indictment." And a terrible indictment it was of the witnesses, in which the accused had time to question them themselves. One after the other the remaining members of the Committee appeared at the bar, including also the men of the Marat Company—Perrochaux, Lévêque, Bollogniel, Grandmaison, and Mainguet. They flew at one another, bandying accusation and counter-accusation. In presence of the dumbfounded judges and a public thrilled with horror, they revealed a cataclysm of untold cruelties, of inconceivable ferocities—massacres, brutal orgies, sharing of spoils, "bathing parties." When on September 28th, after three weeks of argument, Advocate Tronson-Ducoudray rose to lay Phélippes' defence before the Court, he had merely to gather up these various details in order to limn a tragic picture of the Nantes Terror. Without once referring to Carrier, who for the present was out of reach, he told the whole story—the drownings of priests and peasants, the night of Le Bouffay, the plague in the prisons; of the Loire carrying its burden of corpses, of the scaffold permanently standing, and of the shootings without trial. When his pleading was ended the Court gave its verdict of acquittal in

favour of the whole of the defendants, a verdict which amounted to a formal indictment of Carrier and his accomplices.

The trial of the Committee began on October 18th. The tables had now been turned, and in the dock stood those who, three weeks before, came to this very court [1] to bear witness against the ninety-four men of Nantes; while the latter, no longer defendants but witnesses for the prosecution, stood ready to crush them in turn with their vengeful incriminations.

On the benches set apart for the accused, and flanked by gendarmes, sat Goullin, Chaux, Grandmaison, Bachelier, Perrochaux, Mainguet, Lévêque, Louis Naux, Bollogniel, Gallon, Durassier, and Jolly, all members or agents of the erstwhile Revolutionary Committee of Nantes, and whose names have frequently figured in our narrative. Together with them was arraigned Pinart, a ferocious bandit, slayer of women and children, likewise an agent of the Committee, who, while mostly working for his own hand, had taken no active part in the "noyades." Dobsent again presided, while Substitute Petit officiated as public prosecutor.

The reading of the indictment was itself a fore-

[1] The proceedings of these two trials were held in the sometime Great Hall of the Palace, known as "Salle de la Liberté," and where during the Terror the first section of the Revolutionary Tribunal had held session.

taste of revenge to the Nantais present, so long oppressed. They saw their ruthless persecutors arraigned for malversation, reckless misuse, thefts, brigandage, and assassination. The eloquence of the counsel gave itself free scope. "These unbridled beings, more bloodthirsty than Nero, more cruel than Phalaris, have committed every crime under the guise of patriotism. They have trodden their duty underfoot, stifled the cry of innocence, outraged virtue, violated nature. Never will the file of Time erase the mark of the delinquencies committed by these savage men."

After this exordium with full orchestra, the Substitute proceeded to draw a rapid picture of the "noyades." The name of Carrier was not once uttered, much to the astonishment of the audience, which, packed together in the Court, naïvely failed to understand how underlings could be tried and not their responsible superior.

The pleadings began with the depositions of the witnesses; and all whose official duty had brought them in contact with the Committee were seen to follow each other at the bar.[1] What as yet was only confusedly known from the

[1] In order to avoid repetitions this great trial is merely depicted here in its broad outlines, following the succinct account compiled from the file in the *Archives Nationales* by M. Campardon (*Le Tribunal Révolutionnaire de Paris*, ii. p. 42 *et seq.*).

earlier trial of the ninety-four was now ruthlessly dragged to light—the twenty-three drownings hinted at by Phélippes, the executions of children, the sabrings in the streets and squares of Nantes, the Marats exhausted with the slaughter of victims, the hell of the Entrepôt, the obscene cynicism of the executioners.

It was to this avalanche of horrors hitherto untold that the worthy Mercier referred when he wrote, appealing to the future Tacitus or Shakespeare who should relate them, "Make thy own language, for thou wilt have to depict such things as never yet were seen." [1]

With each fresh testimony the tragedy grew in intensity. Men thought they had touched the lowest depth of horror, only to find the previous evidence outdone by that which followed, while cries of abhorrence greeted this steady crescendo of the terrible. When the egg-merchant Leroy appeared, the only one who escaped the drowning of Frimaire 24th, and artlessly recited his marvellous salvation, a horror of grief laid hold upon the audience. Scarcely had he finished his recital, than cries broke out; he was applauded, nay, hugged. Some citizens made a collection among those present and handed to the poor fellow, astounded at his own success, a great bundle of bank-bills.

[1] *Le nouveau Paris,* by Citizen Mercier (Introduction).

Here we have a fish-wife, the woman Laillet, at once servant and prisoner at Le Bouffay, who saw in that jail Mme. de la Métaierie and her four daughters, said to be cousins of Charette. The order came to hand them over without trial to the executioner, and the gate-keeper bade his maidservant prepare them. The woman Laillet took the poor creatures to a room and told them, "My friends, your last hour is at hand, make ready. Carrier orders it. At nine o'clock you will be no more." All flung themselves prone on the ground and prayed. The youngest, a girl of seventeen, handed Dame Laillet a small ring; then sobbing and clinging to their mother they went to their death. The executioner died a few days later of the horror and remorse of it.[1] In Court the woman Laillet drew from her pocket the slender ring bequeathed by the poor dying girl and showed it to the judges, while the hall was filled with sounds of sobbing and expressions of pity.

While Thomas, the officer of health, was speaking of the foul state of the prisons,

[1] The execution of the La Métaierie ladies took place December 19, 1793, and the butcher died at the beginning of January. We do not know, to say truth, whether or not, as the woman Laillet declared, the man in question really succumbed to remorse. See *La Guillotine et le bourreau à Nantes*, by A. Lallié.

the excitement became uproarious. He had seen tubs of excrement at the Entrepôt, in which floated the bodies of children dying or dead. He put on record the drowning of thirty women, all about to be mothers; he attended at L'Éperonnière and La Masilière eight hundred women and children, huddled together without beds or straw, or bread or fire, lacking water, and in such a state of misery that five children died under his eyes in less than four minutes. He accused the Committee of having thrown into the Loire four or five hundred children. Jolly appears to have been in charge of this frightful expedition. His evidence was interrupted by outcries; the spectators protested, "Carrier! Carrier!" and with their cries of anger threatened the delinquents, who were visible above the crowd, now dumbfounded and now defiant; Goullin still boastful, Chaux headstrong and contentious, Bachelier very calm, writing without lifting his head. The remainder were ill at ease—violent, sly, or argumentative, meeting the detailed recital and unanimity of the witnesses with diffuse or laborious explanations. Perrochaux protested that "this talk was only concocted to throw *discredit* on the *labours* of the Committee";[1] Jolly acknowledged having tied up certain prisoners told off to be drowned.—"But,"

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 84, p. 335.

THE ENTREPÔT IN CARRIER'S TIME.

Engraving taken from "La Loire Vengée," Year III.

To face Page 314.

he objected, "I, too, have been pinioned by others to be brought before this Court." And he imagined this made him and his victims quits.[1] In any case, he did nothing but obey. "I always felt that I was only a servant employed as he was wanted, paid and dismissed accordingly."[2] Grandmaison vowed that he had never taken part in any drowning, but "he heard the axe which flung the priests into the waters." When the President made the comment that he must have been at a very short distance from the vessel to hear the blows which sent her to the bottom, he replied, "There were little boats, by the help of which we, the members of the Committee in charge of this excursion, retired, but I did not see the axe that dealt the fatal blow." However, borne down by the testimony of those who saw him slashing arms and heads at the moment the lighters went under, he ended by pleading self-defence: "If I were guilty of such excesses, I should be to some extent excusable, because I was in a kind of intoxication and fighting for my own life against people who wanted to drag me under with them."

"What danger could you run with people caged in a wooden pen?"

"It is not the less true," droned the drowner,

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 70, p. 279. [2] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 81, p. 322.

"that the captives made alarming struggles, and that it was very difficult for us to restrain them." [1]

Some of Goullin's euphemisms were sublime. "Fervid by nature and burning with a zeal that mayhap was too fiery and ill-advised for the public weal," he had not been able "to abstain from a certain animosity towards aristocrats." Such was his defect. For that matter he was an aristocrat himself, and expressed the deepest contempt for the peasants whose death was cast up against him. "The prisoners drowned or shot," he said, "were *all creatures of no account*." [2] Besides, such measures were inevitable. "Men of Paris, if you thought the deeds of September 2nd necessary, our position was, if possible, still more hazardous than yours. These drownings, horrible as they may seem to you, were no less requisite than the massacre in which you indulged on that day."

Socrates Chaux made it his cue to be indignant: being called to answer the evidence of a witness, he ejaculated, "I cannot look on crime arraigning virtue!" [3] At the close of later evidence, crushing to the Committee, he burst out that "all those witnesses were re-

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 90, p. 358.
[2] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 61, p. 242.
[3] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 57, p. 227.

actionaries."[1] "You should send for Charette and his brigands to bear witness against us!"[2] But at times his calmness betrayed him.

"Do you know Maniant and Morin?" the President asked him.

"I do not know them at all," was the rejoinder. Thereupon the judge at once read out an order signed by the speaker and Goullin, giving leave *to Citizens Maniant and Morin to requisition such armed force as they might judge needful for a secret expedition.* So, then, such *cartes blanches*, authorising every sort of rapine and exaction, were given to strangers? Ay, to be sure! The potentates of the Committee admitted with one voice that they signed orders without reading them. What fault could be found with such ways of acting? "A day may haply come," poetically snivelled Chaux, "when in place of the hemlock they would have me drink, the people will do me justice enough to cover my grave with flowers!"[3] Such was his style; he strove to excite pity that he might escape argument. A rope-maker of Chantenay, to whom he owed 600 livres, was met with the thrust, "My humiliations are so great that I shall die before the trial ends."[4] When Bô of the Convention, being cited to the bar, called him a common

[1] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 84, p. 334. [2] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 70, p. 279.
[3] *Ibid.*, vii., No. 3, p. 9. [4] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 96, p. 381.

scoundrel, Chaux choked with anger, gasped, and begged them to carry him to the air that he might take breath and allay his agitation. The President, out of pity, adjourned the Court.[1]

The insinuating Bachelier preserved his honeyed coldness: much busied in noting all the evidence given, he scarcely spoke. When he did raise his voice it was to interject remarks in this strain: "The Committee, with its usual justice"[2]—a phrase which roused a storm of sarcasms and hisses—or "My gentleness, my humaneness are too well known."[3] For all that he signed the order to reincarcerate Leroy, who escaped the drowning of Frimaire 24th. "I confess it with sorrow, and vow that I was forced into it by Goullin, the instrument of Carrier, with whose wrath I was always being threatened."[4]

Bachelier's revolutionary creed was simple in the extreme. "In the difficult circumstances in which we found ourselves, the whole class of the rich was suspect. It was necessary, therefore, to strike not less at those who might hurt than at those who combined the power and the will."[5] A system this, which would allow the inclusion of both innocent and guilty in such coercion. When he had exhausted excuses he began to

[1] *Bulletin*, vii., No. 3, p. 9.
[2] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 98, p. 340.
[3] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 57, p. 226.
[4] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 63, p. 252.
[5] *Ibid.*, vi., No. 78, p. 312.

plead his fears: "We were fathers of families," he protested.[1]

What seems most abject in these endless pleadings is the persistency with which each threw the blame on the other. They bandied responsibilities, tore confessions from each other, and overwhelmed the witnesses with ruthless revelations. Nineteen of these, all henchmen of the sometime Committee, or men of the "Marat" Company, now, at the demand of the Substitute, found their way from the box to the dock. Thus, among others who were seen to take their places beside their former patrons, were the "Marats" René Naux; Richard, the man of the pillow-case; Pierre Foucaud, still wearing shoes torn from one of the priests he had drowned;[2] Gauthier, the cutler; and O'Sullivan, the fencing-master, who boasted during the hearing of having handed over his brother to the executioner; Forget, the Grand Lama; the ferocious Dhéron, amputator of ears; and young Robin, arrested with the Army of the Sambre and Meuse, where he hoped to escape notice—all these were there to boot. But, however serried the ranks in the enclosure of the accused, there was always absent from them the man whose sinister face had dominated the tragedy. At every moment he

[1] Lallié, *Noyades*, p. 11. [2] *Bulletin*, vi., No. 98, p. 402.

was quoted as the instigator, the leading impresario of butcheries and drownings. The spectators called for him, the judges demanded his appearance, the witnesses ceaselessly covered him with guilt, the accused sheltered themselves behind his authority. The Convention, nevertheless, would not surrender its man, knowing itself to be unanimous on that head. Having dealt with Carrier, would not the public conscience demand another scapegoat? Where would such reprisals end? To give up Carrier was to hand over with him the whole Assembly, the approvers and abettors of all his crimes.

This was in fact what Carrier reckoned upon; nevertheless he was afraid. On the very first day of the trial he went to Dubois-Crancé's, and in his anxiety to link his cause with that of his colleagues said, "You see the plan is to have us all guillotined."

The other man, who knew his delinquencies, having succeeded him at Nantes, rejoined brutally, "Put one hand on your conscience and the other on your pistol. If your conscience does not irk you, we will all defend you; if it taxes you with the crimes wherewith they accuse you, then you are a coward if you do not blow out your brains." [1]

Carrier neither laid a hand on his conscience,

[1] Aulard, *Paris sous la réaction Thermidorienne*, i. p. 181.

for it could have told him naught, nor yet upon his pistol, of which he had no wish to make use; he went in search of approval from others, and met everywhere only frowning faces. It was the upright and courageous Lofficial, member for Deux Sèvres, who first ventured to speak in the rostrum [1] of the Nantes massacres. Carrier protested, declaring his readiness to lay down his head on the scaffold if such deeds were proved against him. He was listened to with a bad grace. During the hush a voice, which sounded like a tocsin, cried, "Plenty of others will be proved!" And from that day Carrier felt the ground slipping from under him.

He made a fine defence, regaining, now that life was at stake, the frantic energy he had been wont to display in "making heads spout like volcanoes." Nearly another month went by before the Convention decided to throw him over. From the Court of Justice indignation spread to Paris, daily informed by the papers of the incidents of the trial. The cry of "Carrier! Carrier!" heard every day in Court, was wafted into the street, bawled by the hawkers of news under the windows of the Convention, spoken loudly in the coffee-houses, chanted at the street corners, and echoed in the play-houses, at the doors of clubs, nay, in the very rostra of the

[1] On September 29, 1794 (Vendémiaire 8th, year III.).

Assembly itself. Under this pressure of opinion the men of the Convention finally yielded. On Brumaire 8th they appointed a committee of twenty-one to inquire into the charges brought against their colleague and to draw up a report, which report Romme read at the sitting of November 11th.[1] Carrier answered it by a eulogy of himself. The whole of this audacious *apologia* was a lie. He had fought heroically at Cholet against 80,000 brigands; his horse was killed under him, but he seized another and led back 3000 men into the fight. It was he who subdued La Vendée. His seventeen or eighteen successive victories had exterminated the rebels. There were not more than 300 when he left Nantes. And what pains he had taken to that end! What unremitting labour! He had scarcely slept twenty-four hours in forty days and nights! They spoke of his cruelties,—what were they? During his proconsulate he had only arrested two citizens—no more—guilty of having supplied the Vendeans with arms. Wholesale executions? Drownings? He defied any one to produce an order with his signature for the commission of such crimes. He knew nothing of them. Far from harming such peasants as surrendered at discretion, he had

[1] It is to the papers appended to this document that I refer so often in this volume under the heading *Pièces remises*, &c.

received them with the tenderest brotherliness. He congratulated himself for that matter on these calumnies. He was poor, and aimed at nothing but obscurity; but the happiest day of his life was that on which his enemies had compelled him to recapitulate the services he had the good fortune to render the Republic! In this medley of nonsense one very good sentence escaped him, at once apt and happy. Hinting broadly that his trial was that of the whole Convention, since that body had ordered and approved the measures taken by all its Representatives on circuit, he cried, "Ay, all are implicated here, even to the President's bell."[1]

His fellow-members listened in dignified and profound silence. No sooner did he cease than a hundred voices called for his provisional arrest, which was carried, amid cries of *Vive la République!* And the runaway of Cholet, still a braggart, sneered, "An arrest that is provisional and needless; the brigands never saw my heels."

Four gendarmes led him away. The crowd which awaited him at the gates of the Tuileries reviled him, and followed him with its hootings to the Rue d'Argenteuil. For by special favour

[1] *Courrier*, Brumaire 3rd, year III. "The hyena of Le Gévaudan, when chained and carted through the streets of Paris, evoked less abhorrence."

he was to be under open arrest in his own house. He was granted time to prepare his defence, with free access to all documents adduced by the Commission, and was moreover granted permission to choose a secretary and to receive his friends.

He still had some left! We are told that one evening he gathered around his table twenty-five guests. The four soldiers placed on guard did not like it; so large a number seemed suspicious; were they not going to carry off their prisoner? They therefore found means to impart their concern to the Committee of Safety, which at once sent a reinforcement, and as long as the entertainment lasted each diner had a sentry behind his chair, whose presence did not tend to enliven the meal.[1]

On November 21st Carrier, still attended by his captors, appeared once more at the Convention, which was to listen to his systematic rebuttal of each count of the indictment. He was allowed to ascend the rostrum, and began to deal in his harsh voice, one by one, with the accusations laid against him by the Commission. It was a very long business. He spoke till seven in the evening, protesting his innocence and denouncing his accusers as fanatics, scoundrels, and aristocrats, averring once more that he gave no order for drownings, and citing

[1] Aulard, *Réaction*, i. p. 275.

as witnesses of his heroism the soldiers, who "always saw him on the scene of glory." Truly a singularly dramatic sitting, whose whole interest lay in the presence of this pariah, rejected by all who had been his applauders, his imitators, or his accomplices. Next day, the 22nd, his arguments occupied the whole day; but, as his strength failed, a secretary read out the counts, which he contented himself with answering. The following day he did not appear. It was announced that he was ill, and there was a great hubbub. Was it an excuse? Did they want to save him? It seemed indeed that several Representatives, not less implicated than the drowner of Nantes, held such reprisals to be dangerous, and sought "to hush up the matter." Several declared that all these recriminations were undesirable and could not be substantiated. Legendre, the butcher, sprang in a fury to the rostrum; he was a man of fierce and fiery eloquence, fertile in striking images. "You ask for proofs," howled he; "well, if you want such, make the Loire flow back to Paris. Bring the flats with their plugs, fetch up the corpses of the hapless victims; there are enough of them to hide the living." And he proposed to proceed, in Carrier's absence, to take the sense of the

Chamber, vote by vote, on the question of his being brought to trial, without waiting for the conclusion of his defence.

But Carrier had been warned, and now he came, pale of face, with sunken eyes and hollow cheeks, and wrapped in a garment which added height to his tall figure. He looked like a ghost. They saw him clamber to the rostrum. He cast fierce glances around him, and in a cavernous tone, like a heartrending cry of anguish, suddenly ejaculated, "I saw as I entered fiendish faces, which drank my blood and my life. Well, then, wretches, if you seek both, here they are!" [1]

He laid bare his breast, struck the rostrum heavily, and raised his voice: "Posterity will learn how an accused man, when called upon to defend himself in the temple of Liberty, was insulted by his judges." [2]

It was a terrible juncture. A shudder passed over the assembly, and the culprit proceeded with his defence, now monotonously and dully, now seeming to rouse himself, bursting into fury and gesticulating, so that he knocked over the candles which lit the rostrum. At eleven in the evening he was still speaking, but had found no justification for the "noyades," save the

[1] Tissot, *Histoire de la Révolution*, vol. v.; quoted by Lallié, *Carrier*.

[2] *Courrier* of Brumaire 5th, year III.

threatening one that his fellows had done no less at Laval, at Saumur, at Château Gontier, and Angers. They were impatient for him to be silent; at last he was taken away, and the calling of the vote began.

This lasted till half-past two in the morning, and Carrier awaited the result at home, lying on his bed. He learned, not without justifiable loathing, that of 500 of his fellows who took part in the voting, 498 had gaily handed him over to the Revolutionary Tribunal. Almost immediately an usher of the Convention, accompanied by an aide, proceeded to his room; they came to arrest him. Carrier made an attempt to seize his pistol, but the aide disarmed him. The late Representative was taken into custody and pushed outside, where a party of soldiers was waiting for him. Less than an hour later he was placed in durance at the Conciergerie. Whether he had regained his old arrogance, or was trying to affect a confident belief in a long future, he begged the gatekeeper to be so obliging as to give him a well ventilated apartment. "Accustomed as he was to breathe mountain air, he needed space more than other men." [1]

His downward course to the abyss was

[1] Official report of arrest, quoted by Campardon, *Le Tribunal Révolutionnaire*, &c., ii. p. 97.

wofully sheer. During every hour he had yet to live he was to stagger under some fresh humiliation. It was on November 27th, at his appearance in Court, that he was first greeted with curses and applause. For forty sittings men had waited for him; here he was at last, and they rushed to see "the monster," "the wild beast," tardily trapped. He took his place among those who had been his servile adherents, but, who now rejoiced to see him there, more implicated and more execrated than themselves. What a meeting! He had already stood among them a year ago almost to a day, on the morrow of that *incident of a novel nature* on which they were then congratulating each other.

But Carrier was determined not to yield without a struggle; he knew the law, he knew how to hinder and how to spin out a legal process. Forthwith seizing his cue, he challenged President, Substitute, and jurymen. The Court deliberated, and decided that it must "proceed." He then in a dry tone demanded to be supplied with counsel as the law decreed. No one came forward, so the President assigned him one *ex officio*, who declined; a second whom he named protested that he could not plead for the accused. A third took the same course.[1] The Court then placed his defence in the hands of citizen Hureau,

[1] Campardon, *Tribunal Révolutionnaire*, ii. p. 104.

TWO SILHOUETTES OF CARRIER.
DRAWN AT HIS TRIAL BEFORE THE REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL.
After a Tracing in Henri Lavedan's Collection.

To face Page 328.

a subordinate of the Prosecutor, but Hureau also declined the task as impossible. Antonelle, a former juryman of Fouquier-Tinville's tribunal, was then called upon, but even he declined, and Giroust, a sixth, did the same. Never, surely, during the many centuries that justice had been dispensed in the old Palace, had such a case occurred as that a defendant should be so despised and compromising that no counsel would consent to implore on his behalf the pity of the judges. Carrier, convulsed with fury, vowed that he would defend himself.

His line of pleading was simple. He denied everything, insolently at first, then, when his fellow-culprits protested, with a fierce obstinacy. He had no cognisance of the drownings. Why, yes, he remembered one—one only—and that in all good faith he ascribed to an accident, as he had told his fellow-members of the Convention. When Goullin, Chaux, Bachelier, and the others protested and heckled him, recalling dates and facts, he flew into a rage, denied wholly, spoke of his courage at Cholet, of his excessive humanity and weakness towards the rebels. He was the victim of his own frankness. "All Nantes is conspiring against me; these Bretons do everything in gangs!"

He excited no pity, nay, even less dread than the others. They laughed at his clumsy lies,

at the awkward evasions in which he floundered. Being finally cornered he became silent, and took refuge in a surly refusal to speak, despite the calls of the President.[1] He was confronted with papers signed by himself, whereupon he protested that his signature had been "tricked out of him." His attitude was so abject and sickening that it disgusted even Goullin.

"Come, Carrier," cried the fine speaker of the Committee, "you persist in denying the best-vouched facts. Imitate the good example I set you, and learn to own all your wrong-doings, else you abase yourself in the eyes of the people; you show yourself unworthy ever to have represented it. Your fellow-culprits, your instruments, say rather your poor victims, have long since been playing your part here. Believe me, there is yet time, resume the rôle that beseems you; be great and true, great as a Delegate of the People should be! Own to your work, admit your shortcomings, and even if you should undergo the death-penalty, at least you will carry with you to the grave the regrets of some of your fellow-citizens."[2]

[1] The President: "I call on you, in the name of the law, to answer." Carrier said not a word. The President thrice repeated his summons, as the Criminal Code enjoins, and warned him that, if he persisted, the act would be taken as his fixed intention. Carrier: "In the name of the Law, I call on the President not to depart from it."

[2] Campardon, *Tribunal Révolutionnaire*, ii. p. 118.

Carrier would hearken to no persuasion: he knew nothing, he had done nothing. There was talk of the dinner on board the galliot after the drowning of the priests. What dinner? What galliot? He knew nothing. Adjutant-General Legros, who was one of the witnesses to the entertainment, pressed him.

"You dined on board a galliot, Carrier; you ought to own to it. A man who lies in face of the people is capable of anything."

Carrier remained dumb. Young Robin, always simpering, intervened.

"Don't dally with the truth, Carrier. You were on the galliot, and after dinner you said to me, 'Little b——, little revolutionary, sing "The Pipkin," the song of the Mountain.' And I sang it."

The accused, on whom all eyes were fixed, being cornered at length, yet found a way out.

"I remember," he owned, "having heard the song once or twice." [1]

To see himself recalled to a sense of honour by a Goullin or a Robin was assuredly to plumb the depth of shame and infamy; but there was worse in store for Carrier, and his moral expiation did not cease there. His denials, his refusals to answer, his insolent conduct ruined him. His accomplices made fine

[1] Buchez and Roux, xxxiv. p. 203.

play by declaring themselves his tools, and in the eyes alike of judges, jury, and spectators he was now the sole culprit. By his unskilful and disdainful tactics he had brought down the whole storm on his own head. Becoming conscious of this, he suddenly changed his plan.

At the opening of the sitting of December 13th he asked to be heard. Humbly and like a beaten man he owned that "by his ill-advised counsels and useless denials" he had hitherto concealed the truth. He was sorry for it. He begged the Court to put questions to him; he would answer, and leave nothing unsaid. He owned that, on the strength of orders received, he had been forced to strike those whom the law indicated, but he never had any share in the details of its execution. Frequently he even wept. As for the dinner on the galliot, he remembered now that one day, when he had a headache, some friends took him on board the boat "by way of distraction." He went without any evil intention, but could not tell what had happened there. For that matter he was obeying Lalouet, who claimed to be the friend and envoy of Robespierre.[1] He wound up by declaring that

[1] Lalouet was not one of the accused, nor does he seem to have figured at the trial in the capacity of witness.

he had mislaid many papers. If he found them again he would produce them; if really lost, it was no use talking of them. He undertook, finally, to supply definite information the very next day. On this dramatic touch the sitting was adjourned. Next day at half-past nine the Court sat once more. With an exhausted air and hollow voice Carrier declared that all night through he had been going over in memory all the events on which he had been questioned. He could remember none, but they might take as confessions things of which he was uncertain.

"I have been asked," he added, "for proof that the Government was cognisant of the measures in question. I had them, those proofs, and some were still extant not long ago. But I did not wish to keep them; I wished it all to be buried with me."

That was the end. The arguments were finished. The Prosecutor's speech was read, and the counter-pleadings began. The counsel for the defence were numerous, but only three awakened any interest—Tronson-Ducoudray, appearing for Proust and Vic; Villenave, a Nantes man, for Louis Naux, Guillet, and Chartier, who drew such a vivid picture of Carrier's proconsulship that even the defendants were dazed; and lastly, Réal, who appeared on behalf of

Goullin and Chaux. As he wound up with an affecting peroration, belauding the tenderness of heart and humaneness of his two clients, Gallon, friend and boon companion of Goullin, burst into sobs. He embraced Goullin, choking the while.

"He is my friend! He is a worthy man! He is my friend! He educated my children. Kill me, but save him!"

He fainted and was carried out. The whole audience was melted to tears, and Réal, appealing to the jury, cried with a fine gesture, "Are those savage men, eh?"

Goullin, taking advantage of the sensation, rapidly traced a few lines: forthwith he rose and delivered this fiery allocution, rough notes of which were found among his papers, and which must be quoted at full length that the problem may be duly set before us whether this man was a mere ordinary ruffian, a dangerous lunatic, or a miracle of patriotism.

"It is not on my own behalf that I rise to speak. For what could I add to the arguments of my counsel? Réal, first and foremost, receive my homage! I am pleased in thus making it as public as my gratitude is deep. It is not, I repeat, for myself that I claim to be heard, though it is indeed for my ill-fated fellows.

"Throughout the whole course of these pro-

ceedings I believe that I have always been honest. I shall even try to be majestic in the dock and in adversity, as they taunt me with having sat on the Committee man's easy-chair in my days of *power*. But I have only done the half of my duty. The hour of my liberty or of my death is about to strike, and it is not in the moment of danger that Goullin will recoil.

"Filled with a fever of patriotism, which Carrier's example fomented to delirium, sharing more than any other his principles and his ardours, I am more guilty in my own person than the whole of the Committee. It was I who infused into the souls of my colleagues that burning heat with which I was fired. It was a too great trust in my own disinterestedness, in my republicanism and, I venture to say, in my virtues, that was the undoing of my fellows and myself. Thus, however pure my intentions, I have become the slayer of my comrades. Ah! if it were possible that the People needed victims, I would hereby offer myself a sacrifice. Would that my head might sate the national vengeance! People, jurymen, be indulgent to my co-partners, be lenient to their errors! Turn aside from them punishment and ignominy; restore them to their families, to their country. For they have ever been its warmest defenders, and will serve it yet.

"Let the falchion of the Law fall heavily upon me alone! Let me bear with me to the grave the consoling thought of having saved the lives of my brethren, of patriots. My name, though proscribed by the Law, will at least live in the memory of those for whom I sacrificed myself. Let my blood at length unify the Republic, and bring about the happiness of my fellow-citizens. Let it enforce a terrible lesson on those daring officials who would else be tempted to disregard the laws and exceed their own powers.

"Before I am silent I cannot refrain from one heartbreaking reflection. Over-zealous apologists, forgetting the consolatory office intrusted to them; earnest defenders, while depicting once more the hideous drama of horrors enacted in La Vendée, have bespattered with its odium the whole body of the accused. Apologists transmuted into public accusers; counsel eager to link their names with this imperishable cause—these, I say, even while causing the arches of this temple to ring with the words 'clemency' and 'humanity,' have not hesitated, in order to secure their own reputation, to drag us down to an infamous death, and coldly set their feet on our corpses, that they themselves may attain to celebrity. One of these, taking his place in the dock of himself, and turning aside even from the

defence of his clients, led off with his own defence. In a long series of skilfully arranged phrases he has arraigned the memorable day of May 31st. Nay more, passing in review the martyrs of Liberty, he paused perfidiously at him whose bust threatens him, at *Marat*. Ah, Villenave, I expected more greatness of mind of you! I deemed that, having yourself passed through the crucible of misfortune,[1] you would respect misfortune. I expected of your generosity that you would not base the exculpation of your clients upon the assassination of their colleagues.

"It is enough! I should myself be culpable if I proceeded further in my incriminations. Villenave has a heart, and I leave him to his repentance."[2]

Goullin resumed his seat amid conflicting outcries. He had just won his cause and that of his colleagues. Carrier alone remained unmoved; he knew himself deserted by all, already struck out of the book of humanity. A barrister, Villain, chosen by a decision of the Court, offered his defence, but without any conviction. At half-past twelve at night Carrier

[1] Villenave had been one of the 132 Nantais imprisoned by order of the Committee.

[2] Nantes Library, Dugast-Matifeux Collection. I owe a great debt of gratitude to M. Giraud-Mangin, librarian of the city of Nantes, for the kindness he showed in placing at my disposal the wealth of the great treasure which he guards with so much skill and ability.

was given the chance to speak. To the very hour it was the anniversary of the time when, a year before, the "Marats" in high spirits broke into the prison of Le Bouffay and entered on their ill-omened task.

Carrier spoke for four hours. He recalled the state of Nantes during the time of his proconsulship; he showed how the town was surrounded by a whole province in revolt. And "would they judge in cold blood to-day, now that the wind of public opinion had shifted abruptly, what had been done the year before, amid storms, dangers, and straits, at a time when men were bound only to fix their eyes on the blood-stained face of their country, when they could not and should not be guided by any rule, standard, or law save the welfare of the People?" He expatiated on the excesses committed by the Vendean rebels; spoke of the massacres at Machecoul, in which the "brigands" were said to have slaughtered and cut to pieces eight hundred patriots. They buried them half alive, leaving their arms and legs above ground and exposed; they bound their wives and forced them to witness the suffering of their husbands, afterwards nailing them alive to the doors of houses, together with their children. "The tortures reserved by the Vendeans for the Blues were not less cruel," said he. "The

most common of these was to hang them up to trees by the feet, lighting a brazier under their heads, or to place cartridges in their noses and mouths and set fire to them. . . . They were thrust into ovens and roasted; their noses, hands, and legs were cut off, and they were left thus slowly to perish in pitch-dark dungeons."

He revelled in recounting these abominations, thinking to find in them his excuse. But it would appear that the impression he made was not great. Did not every one reflect that if the Vendean peasants were guilty of such atrocities, it was precisely in order to avenge their brothers drowned at Nantes? And for that matter, by what right could he blame a people for using reprisals, of whom he himself had decreed the wholesale extermination? All that Carrier succeeded in doing was to recall his own crimes and their frightful counter-shock. At half-past four in the morning his harangue drew to a close. Having seen the good effect produced by Goullin's appeal, he tried the same device by way of peroration, beseeching pity for his fellow-culprits. "If national justice must bear heavily on any, let it so bear on me alone."

It was his last word, but its effect was blunted. The jury withdrew to consult, and during the morning their verdict was made

known. Carrier, Pinart, and Grandmaison were sentenced to death, while all the other defendants were acquitted as not having acted "with criminal and anti-revolutionary intent." Dobsent, the President, gave them the kiss of brotherhood and announced, "You are free." The whole band, clambering over the benches, gave vent to its joy boisterously, amid the plaudits of certain exultant Jacobins, and in the midst of onlookers thunderstruck at this incredible judgment.

Carrier saw them retire. We are not told of a single hand being held out to him, or a farewell bidden him by these sharers in his "labours," once so servile and submissive to his orders. He remained alone, he the all-powerful Representative of the People, with Pinart the cut-throat and Grandmaison the drowner, who were to share his punishment. Towards three in the afternoon the trio were placed in a tumbril, which took its way to the Place de Grève.

A tumultuous crowd awaited them on the bridges, in the streets, on the quays, in the Square; men were fain to see the man whose accursed name would never perish. What shouts of "Here he is!" He was very pale and exhausted, but calm, and seemed not to lack courage. At his side Grandmaison was

weeping in great sobs. Pinart was foaming with rage, while his crinkled hair wholly hid his forehead. He struggled and twisted, trying to free his hands and spitting at the populace, which yelled at him, and every time a jolt threw him against Carrier he endeavoured to bite him. The crowd was so dense that the tumbril had to stop by the way. At length, a little before four, it arrived in front of the Hôtel de Ville, where the scaffold had been erected.

Grandmaison, still weeping, was hoisted up first; Pinart, half-dead, followed him.[1] The knife had to be hoisted a second time for him, as its first stroke failed to sever his head. Carrier was waiting. At length the crowd saw him appear on the ladder, holding out his hand to the executioner, who helped him to mount the steps. The doomed man walked boldly towards the frame, but just at the instant when the assistants were strapping him down, a strain of dancing and joyous music rang out from the crowd below. Some wag, interpreting in his own way the general satisfaction, was playing *Ça ira* on a clarionet. The late Proconsul gave a last bound. Straightening himself by a sharp

[1] Aulard, *Réaction Thermidorienne*. The accounts of the execution do not agree. According to some, Pinart struggled mightily. An account, but little known, of the death of Carrier appeared in *Correspondance historique et archéologique* (1908), drawn from the reminiscences of Antoine Tortat.

movement he flung an impotent but terrible glance towards the spot whence came the sound.[1] Then, as if crushed by the weight of the measureless hatred which seemed bearing him down, he bowed his brow. The catch was loosened, and the bloody head, clutched by the executioner and exhibited to the multitude, was flouted with a mighty shout, "Down with the assassins!"

At that very hour Carrier's former sycophants, who had so courted him at Nantes and whom the tribunal had just declared innocent, were gaily gathered together in a revel at Meot's restaurant. Some left the table and hastened towards the Place de Grève to see the three heads fall, returning then to take their place at the merry banquet.[2] In the evening the gang ventured to roam about among the cafés. At the Des Canonniers Goullin, being recognised, was hustled, ejected, and followed. The people of Paris, less lenient than the jury, showed no mercy to "these men of blood." It could not understand how criminals like these could have left acquitted a Court whence, for two years past, so many innocent men had gone forth to the scaffold. The Convention, its

[1] Mercier, *Le nouveau Paris*; Campardon, *Tribunal Révolutionnaire*, ii. 130.

[2] Aulard, *Réaction Thermidorienne*, i. p. 322, and Lallié, *Carrier*, p. 432.

balance lost, having once yielded to public opinion by throwing Carrier to its vengeance, again gave way in face of the outburst of indignation aroused by the finding of Frimaire 26th. It gave orders for the re-arrest of all those so acquitted. They were, so the decree laid down, to appear afresh before some tribunal, but before they could be tried the amnesty of October 26, 1795, was proclaimed, and all were set at liberty.

Goullin wandered about for a certain time under an assumed name, in search of subsistence. He found refuge with an unfrocked and married priest, and died in 1797.[1] Chaux was sufficiently brazen to go back to Nantes, and retired to his villa close to Doulon; he had his son educated at the seminary under the name of Champeau. Covered with ulcers and deserted by all except the son of his tenant and by the incumbent of Doulon, he died on November 26, 1817. No one, despite his prognostication, covered his grave with flowers. Bachelier attained a great age; he lived at Nantes in great seclusion, reading the Psalms and prayers from morning to night.[2] O'Sulli-

[1] Lallié, *Le Sans-culotte Goullin.*

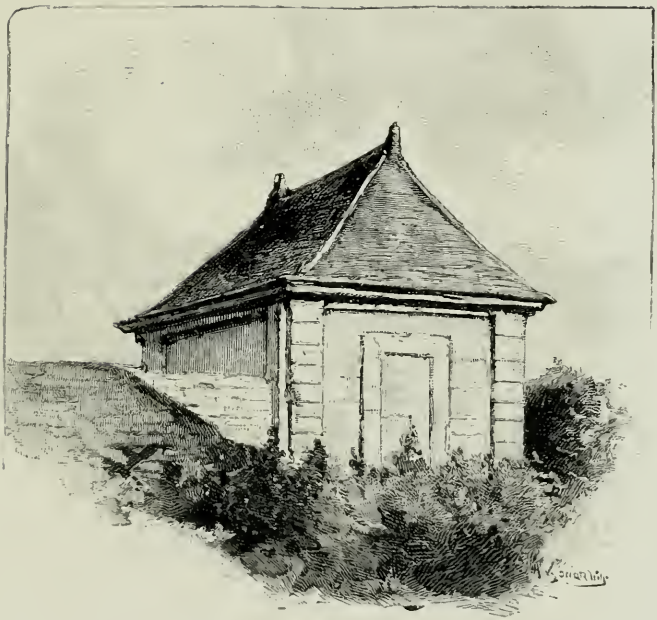
[2] Guépin, *Histoire de Nantes,* quoted by Count Fleury. Bachelier died August 10, 1843. See *Note sur Bachelier,* by Dugast-Matifeux.

van, it is believed, became a tutor. Of the rest all trace is lost.

As for Carrier's widow, who had never left Aurillac, she was still living at the time of the Restoration. She had no children. After the execution of her husband she presented a petition to the Directory in the year VI., setting forth that "being reduced to the greatest straits" she claimed the allowances due to Carrier as Representative of the People, and the return of his confiscated furniture. The sale of the latter had produced 7480 livres in notes.[1] Mme. Carrier lived till 1830, in which year she died on August 18th, in the Rue du Collège, at Aurillac.[2]

The house in the suburb of Bourg-fumé near Nantes, where Carrier had lived, remained during long years uninhabited after he left it. It was looked upon as haunted, and no man ventured to cross its accursed threshold. When, after a long lapse of time, the door was opened, those who first made their way one summer's day into the garden recoiled in astonishment. From end to end of the little close grew a forest of white lilies,[3] crowding one against the other—a fragile and virginal harvest

[1] Archives of the Seine, Department of Domains, 177.
[2] Archives of the town records of Aurillac.
[3] Lallié, *Carrier*, p. 203, note.



PAVILION IN THE GARDEN OF DUCROS' HOUSE.

To face Page 311.

which had sprung up there, quivering and scented, as if within this plot of earth had gathered all the phantoms, now at length laid, which erst had troubled the nights of the Proconsul.

List of Documents Cited

1. List of members, secretaries, and agents of the Revolutionary Committee of Nantes. *Note*, p. 14.

2. Formula of the oath taken by members of the said Committee, p. 18.

3. Warrant and permits of the men of the Marat Company. *Note*, p. 23 f.

4. Form of oath taken by men of Marat Company, p. 24.

5. List of men of Marat Company. *Note*, p. 25 ff.

6. Order issued by the Revolutionary Committee to shoot the prisoners without trial, p. 92.

7. Decree of the Directory of the Department ordering to suspend the wholesale execution of prisoners, p. 95.

8. Order given by the Revolutionary Committee to the carpenter Affilé, relative to preparations for the drownings, p. 100.

9. Permit handed to Lamberty by Carrier, Frimaire 16th, year II. *Note*, p. 106.

10. Fresh orders from the Revolutionary Committee to the shipwright Affilé, Frimaire 17th, year II. *Note*, p. 108.

11. List of the 129 prisoners carried off from Le Bouffay during the night of December 14, 1793. *Note*, p. 132 ff.

12. Order of the Revolutionary Committee forbidding intercession in favour of prisoners, p. 170.

13. Decree of the Revolutionary Committee. Prohibits handing over children confined at the Entrepôt to any other but the naval agent, p. 219.

14. Decree of the Revolutionary Committee regarding prisoners from the Entrepôt sheltered by private individuals, p. 223.

15. Sworn testimony of Vailly, gunner on the *La Samaritaine* hulk. (Second Drowning of Priests. Drowning of December 23rd, &c.) P. 229.

16. Testimony of J. B. Tintelin, prisoner at Le Bouffay, p. 233.

17. Deposition of René Naux, quartermaster of Marat Company. (Drowning of Frimaire 24th.) P. 235.

18. Deposition of Lechantre, of the National Guard. (Deportment of prisoners from Le Bouffay.) P. 237.

19. Deposition of Tabouret, of the National

Guard. (Noyade of Frimaire 24th—December 14, 1793.) P. 238.

20. Deposition of Julien Leroi, who escaped from this same "noyade," p. 239.

21. Deposition of Griault, in charge of a galliot. (Account of two "noyades," the dates of which are not given exactly.) P. 244.

22. Deposition of Jeanne Blanchard, saved from a "noyade," p. 246.

23. Deposition of Julien Pichelet, saved from a "noyade," p. 248.

24. Deposition of Charpentier of the National Guard. ("Noyade" of 6th or 7th Nivôse—January 26 or 27, 1793.) P. 250.

25. Anonymous narrative published concerning the preceding, given to the world in Brumaire, year III., by *L'Orateur du Peuple*, p. 251.

26. Deposition of Pierre Robert, boatman. (Divers "noyades.") P. 256.

27. Deposition of Colas Freteau, seaman. ("Noyade" of Nivôse 3rd, December 23rd, and others.) P. 259.

28. Letter of M. A. Jullien to his father, Jullien, M. of the Convention for the Drôme, p. 274.

29. The recall of Carrier, p. 276.

30. Order from the said Committee to the Revolutionary Committee of Nantes to render

an account of the sums voluntarily paid in or arbitrarily exacted. *Note*, p. 297 f.

31. Letter from Phélippes-Tronjolly to the Committee of National Safety, p. 299.

32. Letter from Phélippes-Tronjolly, dated from Connerré, to the Committee of National Safety, p. 299.

33. Letter from Goullin to the Committee of Public Safety. (Chartres, Thermidor 10th, year II.) *Note*, p. 299 ff.

34. Address of Goullin at the hearing of December 14, 1794, p. 334 ff.

Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co.
Edinburgh & London

G11
B915
Fe
1911

THE LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Santa Barbara

STACK COLLECTION

THIS BOOK IS DUE ON THE LAST DATE
STAMPED BELOW.

MAR 16 '70 2 27 L

10m-6,'62(C9724s4)476D

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
D 000 761 301 1